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ABSTRACT

This study reports results of an internal assessment of theory and practice in five open education elementary classrooms. The study aims to display how the Open Corridor-Workshop Center program provides an educational environment which gives students opportunity for an integrated understanding of curriculum materials. Specifically, the study explores how the open classrooms have permitted the emergence of teacher-made continuities and connections between the learning experiences offered and the child's prior understanding. Descriptive and documentary methods of investigation and analysis appropriate to field settings are employed in this study. Core information was gathered through interviews and observation. Participants' perspectives were recorded and analyzed with the expectation that the internal assessment process and the study results would have an effect on the practices studied. Four areas of inquiry identified in the study are: Evidence of awareness of (1) the whole school, (2) people as resources, (3) patterns in curriculum content and (4) the need to match the child's patterns and prior knowledge. The study reports extensively on these areas of inquiry. It was found that the open classroom teachers made curriculum decisions based on considerations of continuity and connection with children's understanding. Ideas of continuity and discontinuity in educational practice were extended and clarified. The questionnaire used in this study is appended. (Author/RH)

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Continuity and Connection

Curriculum in Five Open Classrooms

by Beth Alberty with Lillian Weber

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Founder and Director: *Lillian Weber*

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PART ONE - RATIONALE

1: Introduction: the Center program as site and source of research

The Workshop Center-Open Corridor program has been visible and widely recognized since its inception as a source of innovation in educational practice, of developments worked out in actual school settings by volunteering teachers and principals, with the support of Open Corridor advisors and the Workshop Center. The Open Corridor-Workshop Center program is associated with open education and looked to for its positions on issues that underlie responsive, flexible and humane teaching and learning in public school settings. Indeed, the vocabulary of its formulations has become part of current discussions of learning and teaching, of mainstreaming and equality in education. In part because of traditional distinctions between "service" and "research" or theory," however, the presence in the program of a strong thread of theoretical development, accompanying the development of practice and informing the positions elaborated, has been inadequately understood. The program originated in theoretical activities--in conceptualization of how children learn, in analysis of the discrepancies between children's learning so conceived and actual practice in the schools, and in subsequent conceptualization of how organizational structures and processes in schools could be modified in the direction of a better match with children's learning.

Naturally, the program's implementation of theory has involved service. The propositions that were being tried were *about* children's learning, teachers' learning, and the real conditions supporting learning. These propositions had evolved from observations and from accumulated research on child development and schools. How else but in real school situations could such theory be further explored, elaborated, clarified? Moreover, there was value invested in these propositions, a strong belief based on observation and study that they represented reality and could actually work. This belief served as an impetus to implementation and continuing to try in the face of great difficulty. Thus, the Center program has been *action*, and it has served, but it has never been a service in the sense of a fixed set of techniques or arrangements that could be "duplicated" unreflectively in whatever situation.

In fact, the Center program is both theory and practice, research and action. Like the DNA molecule, the program is a double-helix in which the strands of alternating theory and practice twist and face each other. The strands are linked by combinations of the base elements seen as essential features and conditions of human learning--educability, diversity and heterogeneity, social interaction and voluntarism. The elements are always actualized in the particular history of specific children, teachers, and schools. The distribution of the elements, the sequence and length of the chain, is what gives the Center work its visible form. The relationships are organic.

The generative core where theory and practice are intertwined and related is the process of internal assessment and reassessment that has characterized the program since its inception and of which the study reported here is one aspect. (This process of internal assessment and reassessment, represented in much of the Center's published and unpublished documentation, was partially described in the Center's proposal to the Office of Education Teacher Center Program, Spring 1978 and 1979.) The present study emerged through this process of internal assessment. Its topic resulted from observations and discussions of current practice in the Open Corridor as that practice related to the conceptions underlying the program and their realization over time. It was conceived as an intense focus on an aspect of this practice, resulting in a re-examination of the underlying ideas. This re-examination, it was anticipated, would contribute both to further development of practice and to the general understanding of open education curriculum.

The study's location within the program, within this internal assessment process, immediately situates it in the conceptual and historic framework of the program. The study--its topic, definitions, methodology and interpretation--is embedded in conceptualizations underlying the program, and is dependent in its timing on the past development of these conceptualizations in practice. In the next section of this report, the relationship between the study and this framework of conception and history is briefly described. In the subsequent section, the implications of this relationship for the study methodology are suggested.

As will be described more fully in the next section, the changes in school strucutres and processes projected by Open Corridors were intended to create a context and possibilities for teachers to assume responsibility and decisionmaking on curriculum that would be in continuity with the ways in which children's learning was understood to occur. The projected changes have taken time to develop. Only more recently has focus on the ways teachers have found within the organizational changes to create curriculum capable of engagement at many levels, from many angles and in many ways, and deeply connected to children's interests and experiences been observed to be possible and necessary.

The study is in effect an evaluation and validation of the organizational changes that have been made, of the development of the idea of open education. It seeks to illuminate the question of how the Open Corridor-

Workshop Center program has evolved in actuality towards its goal of creating a richer environment of possibilities for all children's "synthesizing of understanding." The further importance of the study, within the interest of its sponsors, N.I.E., in how school change becomes self-sustaining, lies in realization of the concept of an inherent reciprocity of changed structures and changed curriculum--such that changed curriculum becomes part of the self-sustaining process, contributing to the stability of changes as well as advancing them.

2: The study question and its conceptual and historic framework*

Continuity and connection were basic considerations in conceiving and developing the Open Corridors program. Actually they grew from initial critique of the discontinuity fostered by existent patterns of school organization and relationship. Processes of continuity were seen as underlying children's growth and learning, its unsegmentalized, interactive, constructive, connection-making nature. Teacher support for children's learning was conceived as making connection with the child--with the child's way of learning; with his or her deep, persisting interests; with his or her prior experiences and understanding. Organizational structures and processes that would help teachers make the connections and relatinships that would enable their response to the child's continuity and unevenness were projected as the appropriate direction of change.

The concern for discontinuity, continuity and connectedness is expressed over and over in the rationale and internal discussion of Open Corridors. Words like access, interaction, community, relationship, persistence, construction, carry the idea of continuity and connection in its many applications. The persistence of the commitment to better support for children's learning through continuities on various levels has made of time itself a "continuity" of the program.

Ten years of Open Corridor history have been a continuous development of long-term relationships with schools of experienced teachers and advisors, and of parents' and principals' long-term active and personal contribution to the schools. The changes in schools have enabled a longer, more continuous view of the child's learning and of teachers' learning. The evolution of the original idea and commitment through practice is in itself a continuity.

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*This section includes a brief summary of the conceptual and historical framework of the Open Corridor-Workshop Center program that is immediately pertinent to the study question. The summary is based on an extensive documentation, published and unpublished, that is partially listed in the Appendix. Reference is made in the following pages to some specific pieces of the documentation related to this study but it is to be understood that the study is framed by conceptions and history carried in all writings emanating from the Workshop Center and from Lillian Weber.

Early conceptualizations supporting continuity were focused on changes in school organization and process that would lead to better support for children's learning by releasing and empowering teachers' decision-making on what happened in the classroom, including curriculum. These changes in organization and process allowed the creation of teaching situations that would be in continuity with children's own processes of learning. In the changed school situations children would be more visible in their individual learning styles and interests, their characteristics ways of approaching, re-engaging and grappling with the task of making sense of the world. Now enabled to observe children in the particularism of their age and individuality, teachers would have a basis for an aware planning for connection and continuity with children and for response to children's own connections and patterns. Teachers would not be bypassed by prescribed formats and content but encouraged to develop their own individual ways of using the changed circumstances of teaching.

> Overwhelmingly, the entire first term, along with bits of specific help, has been really and correctly an observation of how teachers themselves develop the use of the changed structure. It is really the teacher's use of this, in her own style, that is to be reinforced, and that is to be assisted, not an imposition of an overall standard style. There may be an overall sense of what is needed in the classrooms, an overall direction, a pointing out of directions for further development, but teachers are to be helped within their own style.
>
> -Lillian Weber, in a report of the first year of the Open Corridor in P.S. 84, "Expansion of Corridor Project, September 1969-January 1970," 1970, unpublished documentation.

The study has as its question this release of teachers' decision-making in the context of Open Corridor changes in organizational structure and process in the schools, and the effect of teachers' individual decision-making on the development of continuity and connection in curriculum.

The study was cast around teachers' awareness of connection and continuity in planning and making available to children individually and in groups the content they call their curriculum. The study asked: In what ways, in their planning and implementation of curriculum, were teachers now self-consciously linking with what they knew had already occurred in the child's past? In what ways were they anticipating and building bridges to the child's future experiences? To what extent were they demonstrating in their planning and in their interactions with children an understanding of how to help the child make his or her own connections between and among the materials/activities/experiences they offered? To what extent were they allowing the child time and experiences of re-encountering for his or her process of building connections? Did they recognize what the child brings to the curriculum and did they provide for building on to what the child brings? These and other aspects of teachers' awareness and, to a lesser extent, of children's awareness, were to be studied as evidences of how the organizational possibilities for children's learning had been realized. Teachers' decisions both in planning and in implementing their curriculum were assumed to reflect their awareness.

* * * * * * *

In the conception underlying the Open Corridors, a conception based on a large body of child development study, children's learning is an active, connection-making process that is individual in style, path and pace and uneven in its progression. The individuality of this process depends on a personal coherence that, extended through time, becomes a personal continuity that is the basis of the learning connections the child makes. The child was and is viewed as unique and whole, and synthesizes his or her understanding in a way that integrates intellectual, social and emotional capacities. The world, from the child's view, is taken in whole, unsegmented into "fields" of knowledge or experience. Development is built through continuous interaction, propelled by natural curiosity, with the particular world around the child, the physical world but also and especially the social world. The child, it was understood, is born into a context of human social interaction and his or her learning can proceed only in such a context.

> It is not only a child's play but his relations to other people, even as he plays, that lead to corrections, reaccommodations, better adaptation to reality, and finally, learning. The intense egocentricity of a child, intellectually and emotionally, is corrected through companionship with children and interaction with their different purposes and points of view. From his companionship with other children he gains perspective about adults in his life, and can find allies against their pressures. Since social interchange, discussion, and differing points of view are essentials for this operation of the challenge of discrepancies, a *free* social interchange is "fed" best in a challenging atmosphere, rich in possible activities that can provide the "stuff" of discussion.
>
> -Lillian Weber, *The English Infant School and Informal Education*, Prentice-Hall, 1971, pp. 176-7.

Social interaction as an important process in learning was still further underlined as Open Corridor advisors and teachers immersed themselves in study of language acquisition and development (*Notes*, March 1973).

Of course, learning in school is an amalgam of the child's personal agenda and the institutional agenda. But the conception of children's learning just referred to had important consequences for formulating an idea of how best to support learning, since it was and is assumed that continuity with the patterns of the child's learning would enable the child to bring all of his or her own resources and energies to his or her own learning. The need for continuity was especially stressed because learning is uneven, a process of groping, re-encountering, hesitating, and leaping, in which understandings may be more developed in one situation than in another.

Given this conception of children's learning, what were the structures and processes that would support continuity for the child, that would themselves be continuous with the child's way of learning? Their shape was modelled immediately from the conception. From the idea of learning as active, individual and uneven came an emphasis on providing rich materials and experiences, time and freedom to use them in a variety of ways, independently and with other children, at a pace and in a way appropriate to each child. From the idea of learning as embedded in human relationship and as uneven came a commitment to social context, to an intimately-scaled and heterogeneous community, to access to children and adults beyond the immediate classroom and grade. From the idea of the wholeness and individuality of the child's synthesizing of understanding came a view of curriculum undivided into subject areas, of curriculum organized around children's questions.

The conceptualizations about children's learning were thus matched by propositions about school organization. These propositions were reinforced and added to as consideration was given to what structures and processes were necessary to support *teachers* who volunteered to begin moving in the direction of making a better match with children's learning. Such a movement was a change that required rethinking and experimentation on the part of the teacher. Indeed, because teachers in the traditional school in fact do not conceive of their role as matching the child's learning, extensive rethinking was required.

In the analysis underlying Open Corridors, the teacher was and is considered the central agent in change, the person closest to the children and therefore in the best position to observe their needs and interests and to respond to these. The teacher's assumption of responsibility for change was held to be a gradual process, necessarily accompanied by gradual development in the teacher's understanding of children's learning and of the possibilities for supporting it.

The view of school and teacher change as a developmental process and as requiring the active and personal initiatives of the participants parallels and reciprocally supports the idea of learning in children as a developmental process propelled by personal interest and activity. Thus, there is a powerful convergence in the Open Corridor structures and processes of separate yet interlocked ideas of learning/learning setting and institutional change, a convergence that has undoubtedly contributed to the effectiveness of the Open Corridor reorganizations and that gives double weight to the influence of the teacher's decision-making on curriculum.

This analysis of children's learning and teachers' development indicated the need for new organizational structures and processes in schools. But analysis of the structures and processes needed to support the continuity of children's learning and to support teachers' assumption of responsibility for this continuity was not in itself sufficient to produce change in the formal school. The existent school structures defeated attempts to develop the kinds of supports for children's learning just described. Lillian Weber analyzed the defeating factors as: the massive size of the school; its hierarchical relationships; its prescriptive syllabus; the isolation of the teacher and of the individual child in classrooms that did not foster social interaction.

Based on this analysis and on a developmental understanding of children's learning, a conception of how change in the existing school patterns could be accomplished was formulated and projected as Open Corridors by Lillian Weber. This conception was of "small changes" that would modify the schools, at first slightly, small changes that would inject new possibilities, and that could over time be supported in their development and spread, eventually becoming self-sustaining and self-generating. No notion of "full development," no end model of "success," was projected because the conception was one of interaction with the reality, and the reality would be different in each school. The changes were conditional, not on particular circumstances, but on the agreement of parents, principals and teachers to make a start.

The first of the "small changes" was to mediate the massive size of the school. A setting of more intimate scale was formed, a setting appropriate to children's perspective and conducive to more frequent and informal social interaction among both children and teachers. Small groupings of heterogeneous classes whose teachers volunteered to work together were organized as sub-communities around a common corridor space that became the vital link of community. In these new communities, children had new possibilities for interaction with other classes of different grades, different interests, etc. Teachers, too, had a chance to interact--to meet, discuss, share resources, etc.--and through connections with one another to create bridges for children to other aspects of school and community. In this way, the children's possibilities for learning were enriched, and continuities contributive to their apprehending activities were sustained.

Now so much has changed that it is difficult for anyone involved to remember immediately the extent of change. Reference, for example, to the early publication *Open Door* reminds one of the change from tracked classes to heterogeneous classes, of the negotiations with the Fire Department to enable use of the halls for activity and displays, of difficulties in adjusting the fixed institutional arrangements of classrooms and halls to accommodate smaller groupings of children and more active and interactive work, of the first efforts to reorganize cluster teachers' schedules to more closely support the teachers' work. Any reading of reports from the first years of the program (Weber, 1969, 1970) suggests the detail and intensity of the "small change" process in interaction with and implementation of the "big principle."

Structures and processes to help start the small changes, to follow-up on their possibilities and on the implications of experience with them, followed. The Open Corridor advisors aided in planning and implementing the reorganizations They encouraged teachers to make initiatives in rearranging, provisioning and scheduling their classrooms in order to allow more active engagements by the children both with materials and with each other around materials. They held meetings of the corridor teachers in different classrooms on the corridor, urged teachers to visit each other and inquire into each other's work, and in other ways the advisors promoted the development of an interdependent community of teachers. They also helped teachers take advantage of the new arrangements to observe children at work--to note how children use materials, what their points of entry are, what their interests and priorities are, how they pursue a question. The advisors helped teachers take a longer view of children's thinking, giving scope to the teachers' context of interpretation of observations. The advisors helped teachers draw implications from their observations for rethinking their plans and provisions, for making further changes in organization and curriculum, changes that made more and closer connection with children's prior experience and understanding. Advisory staff development supported advisors' awareness and growth in understanding of the rationale of their work and, as part of this, of the significance of continuity and discontinuity in learning and curriculum. From this base, advisors were able to recognize and confirm teacher initiatives which supported continuity and connection for children. (For a full description of the advisor's support for teachers' development, see

The Open Education Advisor.)

Teacher reflection and relearning were also supported by the Workshop Center. The Summer Institute provided opportunities for curricular explorations that could also be pursued independently at the Center, with its rich and inviting curricular resources, materials and activities, and experienced staff. (See *The Teacher As Learner* and *Notes*, October 1972 and October 1973.) Advisors themselves, through Workshop Center processes of shared assessment and reassessment, including weekly advisor meetings, kept themselves sensitized to the impact of their work and implications for further development. (See, for example, *Notes*, October 1972, June 1973, Fall 1975 and *The Open Education Advisor*.)

Support for teachers has increased over the years of Open Corridors as advisors have assumed other positions in the school system (Delano, 1975), as principals have emerged as educational leaders, as parents have joined in collaboration with school staff, as teachers have become experienced and have assumed responsible roles in sharing with less experienced teachers, with each other and in continuing development of better ways of supporting children's growth. (Aspects of the development of work by principals, parents and experienced teachers were reviewed in the anniversary issues of *Notes*--Summer 1978, Winter 1977 and Fall 1977, respectively.)

The development of these changes in organizational structures and processes has taken time. It has taken time for teachers to grow in capacity to assume responsibility and to develop the resources--including their links with other teachers--for decision-making. Full emergence of possibilities for curriculum continuities has depended on the elaboration of corridor relationships, on development of sophistication in provisioning, scheduling, grouping, recordkeeping. Schools and teachers are still under pressures from the past history of centralized curriculum prescription and pressures for focus on compartmentalized skills in "the basics." These pressures, currently again on the upsweep, have helped slow full development of continuity and connection in open classroom curriculum. However, the changes sought by the Open Corridors have been widely recognized by those within and those visiting the schools. The 10th anniversary celebration last spring stimulated great interest and curiosity about the changes that had taken place over ten years, changes that apparently freed a teacher's capacity for decision-making on a curriculum that seemed to be in continuity with children's learning. A number of settings were clearly well-established and highly-developed. Many observers noted the rich provision for children's activity and interaction, the rich curricular resources and support, and the imaginative implementations by teachers. The time had come to explore more intently the impact of Open Corridor changes on curriculum. The present study was proposed as a new step within the program's continuous process of assessment and reassessment, one designed to provide documentary evidence of how the changed organizational structures and processes have actually permitted the emergence of connection and continuity in curriculum and to develop a clarified and elaborated conception of what continuity and connection in curriculum means.

3: The study methodology

The study employs descriptive and documentary methods appropriate to field settings, with their complex contextual meanings. These methods relate to research that is "ecological" (Bronfenbrenner, 1976), uses a "case study" approach (Stake, 1978), is "practical" (Strike, 1979) and observational (Cooley, 1978). It also relates to documentary methods and approaches described, for example, in monographs by Carini (1975), Patton (1975), Elliott (1976), and to an interview approach described by Bussis, Chittenden and Amarel (1976).

However, just as the study's location within the program profoundly determines its conception, so this location influences its methodology. As has already been described, the generative core of the program, where theory and practice are intertwined, is the process of internal assessment and reassessment of which the current study is part. This process is based on *participation*, on the gathering and consideration of the multiple perspectives of all those--children, teachers, advisors, Workshop Center staff, principals, parents, paraprofessionals, visitors, researchers--who participate in the program. Through this process the material for reflection is gathered and thus participation serves as a *source* of material, as a means of collecting and interpreting it, and as a means of returning reflection immediately to practice.

The process of gathering participant perspectives for reflection and response that will intensify participation has taken many forms in the course of the Center's history: observation at the Center and in schools; evaluation by students; questionnaires and interviews to teachers and principals on various aspects of the work; evaluation by outside researchers and funding agencies. Perhaps most important as a means of gathering, and certainly the major crucible for the reversing reactions that revitalize both theory and practice, is

> ...the pooling of discussion and reflection that goes on in meetings of groups of participants. These meetings may be of experienced teachers, with some parents and Workshop Center staff; of teachers in a Corridor, joined by an advisor; of a group of parents or principals at the Center. Because advisors and Workshop Center staff join these meetings, the material of the meetings is brought back to the weekly staff development meetings at the Center for still further reflection. All this constitutes a planned and structured process, fostering the interaction of many points of view from many sources of information, for identifying current needs, possibilities, and impact. It occurs in a broad context of goals that are constantly refined. These discussions are critique as well as problem-solving.
>
> -WCOE, "Proposal to the Office of Education Teacher Center Program," 1979, p. 26.

Other occasions for reflection are offered by the planning and review required to write proposals and reports, and by larger-scale events such as the 10th anniversary celebration last year, which renew the vision of work by their intentionally-wide and long-range perspective.

Participation is one of several aspects of the conduct of the study that are unusual in research and result from the study's location within the Open Corridor-Workshop Center program. A related aspect is *responsiveness*, meaning the modification and adaptation of initial plans for procedures and focus according to the developing reality of the program and emergent insights. Subsuming to an extent both *participation* and *responsiveness* is the *internal stance and development purpose* of the study. Narrowly, this *internal* reference relates to the development and carrying out of the study by a staff member. It relates to staff awareness of and interaction with the study focus in relationship to other program work. However, as the study went on, the *internal* reference came to refer more broadly to the fact that the conduct of the study proceeded by *intensifying* the awareness of all participants--for example, the teachers interviewed--of the issues inherent in their work and of the historical perspective underlying it. The study thus proceeded by becoming *internalized*.

As part of an internal assessment process, the study was expected to have an effect on what was being studied. This effect would occur not simply because reporting back to practitioners was immediate and direct, but because the process of collecting data around an issue inherent in their work--whether they were immediately conscious of the issue or not--could spontaneously refocus and intensify their thinking. *And this effect was considered desirable in the rationale of the program and consequently of the study*, which, in this sense, resembles action research. Thus, for example, the interviews were explicitly about continuity and connection in curriculum and asked directly about what were concieved to be aspects of continuity. Where teachers' awareness of continuity was insufficient for study purposes or their focus was only on the current and immediate situation, it was understood that the interview would include further explanation and reminders of history. Staff and teachers were expected to recognize the issue, and indeed, this is what happened.

Obviously internalization, and the emphasis on participation and responsiveness, do not fit the definition of research that calls for distance, impartiality, freedom from value and that guards itself by reference to a traditional logic of methodology and by strict adherence to prescribed procedures. (The significance of the internal position of the research/documentor is discussed in Alberty, 1979.) What guards the present study is precisely its relationship to the value, rationale and reality of the Open Corridors-Workshop Center program, a relationship represented in participation, responsiveness, and development of internalized understandings and meanings. The participation of the Director, Lillian Weber, who originated and has guided the development of the program, in discussion of conceptualization at every phase of the study from the perspective that is most continuous and that carries the original idea most fully, is particularly relevant to this relationship.

The core information of the study was gathered through interview and observation, familiar procedures which were given slightly unusual emphasis in application. The internal location of the study made it, like exploratory research, a way of clarifying definitions and pointing to further possibilities for research and implementation. Emphasis was therefore given to flexibility, similar to that required in field research, in the use of the interview and observations. The adaptations and modifications that occurred were construed as *part* of the data, as significant reflections of the reality being studied and of the conceptualization of that reality. (The adaptations and modifications are described briefly in Part Two, more extensively in the report of the study on which this bulletin is based, and partially in the interim report "Curriculum Continuity," *Notes*, Winter 1978.) To the interview and observation procedures were added discussion and informal interaction, already developed as part of the program's assessment-reassessment process, but now specifically focused around the study topic.

In thinking through the study's relationship to the program, consideration was given to the limitations that might be specific to the interview and observation procedures. The teacher interview questions were to elicit factual information and description from teachers about their relationships with each other, about their planning, classroom organization and other concrete aspects of their work. The teachers' responses were to be examined for evidences of their awareness of the importance of continuity in curriculum and of their reliance on Open Corridor structures and processes in planning for and fostering continuity. For these purposes the interview procedure was sufficiently guarded. This is especially so since the interview would be followed up by further interactions with teachers on awarenesses that seemed implicit in the interview or that were raised in observations. (A rationale for the use and limitations of the interview can be found in Bussis, Chittenden and Amarel, 1976.)

The observations were to intersect with the interviews around the descriptions of classroom organization and provision, of relationship to other teachers, of enactment of awareness of curriculum continuity. The observations would supplement and provide check on descriptions of practice gathered by interview. In the same way, observations--which would be selective, discontinuous, partial in relationship to the totality of the teacher's provision and interactions, and integral to the observer's own awareness--would be guarded by reference to the interview. The relationship between interview and observation would be such that, for example, observations might report teacher actions that would suggest an awareness the teacher did not describe in the interview, or that would suggest the teacher's described awareness was ahead of his or her implementation. These points of discrepancy would be just the ones to raise the possibilities for further implementations, rethinking or for further research. They would serve to mobilize awareness. The study design allowed for points of discrepancy to be followed up in a variety of ways. Observations and teacher interviews together would and did support the construction of a picture of teacher awareness of and provision for continuity and connection in curriculum as the teacher expressed his or her awareness both reflectively and in action.

The documentary material gathered included the perspectives and observations not only of teachers and of the documentor but of others who worked in the setting. Children's statements and awareness as reported in the observations and evidenced in their work offered another perspective on what continuity was being made available to them in the curriculum. Principals, advisors, parents and experienced teachers contributed their observations and experience, as described more fully below.

PART TWO - STUDY DESCRIPTION

4: Setting up the study: design, procedures and modifications

DEFINITIONS

The working definition of curriculum used in this study is *the content* that the teacher intends to make available to the children and his or her implementation of intention. Curriculum thus includes planning and organization as these affect the engagement with content; the materials and resources gathered as support; how the teacher introduces and explains curriculum topics, activities and materials; the way the teacher follows up, responding in interaction and with new plans to the children's engagements with what the teacher offers. Curriculum also includes the curricular possibilities teachers intentionally or incidentally make available to children through relationships with other teachers--access to different experiences and materials in other rooms, cross-grade exchanges that recall past experiences for the child or open new aspects of a familiar material, etc.

The study focused documentation on the curricular themes around which many Open Corridor teachers organize their presentation of content. To attempt to document all aspects of curriculum was beyond the scope of the study resources. In the classes studied, these themes were essentially a combination of social and environmental studies, approached through a variety of activities. Observations included a look at how children's basic questions (e.g., "family," "the past," "spatial orientation" or "mapping," "housing," etc.) were being provided for in areas other than social/environmental studies, and at the teacher's evocation of what children already knew in these areas when a new skill, idea or activity was introduced.

The term *continuity and connection in curriculum* referred, for purposes of the study, to the continuities and connections that the teacher makes or facilitates between what he or she offers and the content that the child brings, whether explicitly as experience or implicitly as understanding or question. Thus, curriculum continuities include content connections between children's past and present experiences and understandings; content connections with their future experience and understandings; continuities between school curriculum and home; relationships among phenomena within and across conventional content areas; and relationships between the deep questions that children ask repeatedly and the organizing questions of traditional fields of knowledge. It was envisioned as possible that, as the study progressed, some particular focus among these continuities would emerge as more significant or immediate and would become the main focus of the interpretation of documentary evidence. The release of teachers' interests as a development of their decision-making powers (discussed in section 9) was taken as the major such focus.

The idea of curriculum continuity in open education on which the study focused and which it hoped to help make more explicit differs from the continuity structures that have existed in traditional schools. Sequencing of grades and subjects does presuppose continuity--but this continuity derives from a content expert's analysis of logical sequence in presentation of the material and of the time necessary to complete the sequence. It is a continuity externally-determined and prescribed to teachers. It is often without concern for the teacher's awareness of the inherent order of subject matter. It is equally without concern for the teacher's awareness of connections that the child might make or has made with the world reality supposed to underlie subject material and that may or may not link with various aspects of the prescribed sequence. In the view presented here, teacher awareness is the necessary basis for the teacher's curriculum decision-making and adaptation in support of the child's further development.

INITIAL STEPS

The initial plan of the study called for interviews and observations in two schools. The choice of two schools was suggested by the fact that schools are individually distinctive in physical setting, in regulations governing use, in leadership of teachers and principals in making changes, in resources, in history of the school and its staff, in parent interests and support, and in many other aspects.

The study schools were ones that have had continuous relationship with Open Corridors and in which innovative implementations and extended inter-relationships among school participants have spread through the school. In such settings, the possibilities for teachers to enact their awareness of continuity and connection in curriculum were most likely to emerge clearly and broadly.

Documentation for the study was planned to focus on relationships and continuity in a single Open Corridor in each school, but it was soon discovered that such a focus was not suitable. For one thing, longstanding corridor units had been shuffled in the series of budget cuts and reassignments of teachers over the past several years, and had not re-formed with their previous cohesiveness. Moreover, in some instances, the spread of Open Corridor effect in the school had resulted in friendships and relationships between teachers that transcended contiguous corridor groupings. These relationships constituted, as advisor

Theodora Polito termed them, "corridors of relationship." In some instances, corridors had expanded so that, though the corridor grouping remained, its boundaries were stretched.

Through discussion with Workshop Center staff and the principals, the unit of focus for the study was shifted to three classrooms in each school. In each case, the selection was from a group of experienced teachers within the school who had had long and continuous relationships with the program, and who were engaged in a variety of curricular pursuits. Selection was not intended to identify *exemplary* practice since the program specifically rejects the notion of an end model of full development. The study teachers were chosen because, like others in the schools, they were *continuing* their development.

Additional circumstances narrowed the choices. In one school, a group of three upper-grade teachers had pooled resources and expertise to develop an umbrella curriculum that each was developing in different ways. Three upper-grade teachers in the other school were asked to participate. One declined because of heavy commitments to other activities and, since other sources of data had by then appeared, it was decided not to add another classroom. Five classrooms in all were documented for the study. In addition, the documentor was observing in two lower-grade classrooms in one of the schools for another study and was able to collect some material on continuity in the early grades from these observations.

Staff discussions of the initial study plan and of the preliminary interview format served to establish the study concern with continuity in everyone's mind, and to bring out and elaborate additional aspects of the initial conceptualization. For example, Wilma Heckler (Workshop Center advisor to the City College Bilingual Teacher Corps) added an important piece by recalling that one result of her collaborative work with another teacher had been that the children in her class had access to another person whom they knew to have expertise in certain areas such as planting or animals. The themes of the teacher as person and the continuity of the teacher's own interests as a curricular resource became a major organizing thread of the study data. As another example, Edward Chittenden, with whom planning for the study was discussed, emphasized the necessity of siting the study in the history of the program.

Subsequently, the issue of continuity became a leitmotif running through the staff's activities at the Center and in schools. Regularly-scheduled meetings of experienced teacher and parent groups touched on continuity from time to time. Different aspects of the need for awareness of the history of change and growth in the school were brought out at parent breakfast and advisor meetings. An annual overnight meeting of the extended advisory (the circle of former advisors described by Georgia Delano, 1975) and experienced teachers was explicitly planned around the issue of continuity. About fifty people in five discussion groups reminisced about their experiences of continuity as children and shared examples and ideas about the non-sequential kinds of connection they had seen and encouraged in their curricular work with children. The meeting was held early in the study, and the loose structure quickly created an enlarged and elaborated set of examples and definitions embedded in particular perspectives. These perspectives and staff discussion became the basis for the distillation of six areas of inquiry around which the data were initially organized.

This year's work of Theodora Polito in the two schools being studied was the development of a group staff development process that converged with the study from its different point of origin. Asked about their own needs in development at this point of considerable experience, teachers independently identified discussion of long-range development as a priority. Thus, the timeliness of the study was confirmed by the teachers themselves. Notes from the resultant teacher-principal long-range planning meetings added more information and reflection about continuity to the study.

From yet another source came affirmation of connectedness in content. The Workshop Center's annual exploration of a single curricular theme--this year, the ways in which the great explorations affected the development of science, technology and culture--was conducted with a heightened eye to connection-making and to the different ways in which individuals contributed and drew from the experience (Spalding, 1978).

THE INTERVIEW

The plan called for an intensive interview with the five teachers as a major piece of the documentation. Interview questions were initially determined by the nature of the study focus and were elaborated through discussion with the Director and advisors. Interviews developed by Bussis, Chittenden, and Amarel, by Carini, and by the University of North Dakota Center for Teaching and Learning were also consulted.

The interview was *not* a checklist of what the teacher was presumed to be aware of but an outline of what the interviewer needed to be sure had been discussed with the teacher at some point. The interview was informal, open-ended, and questions were incorporated as teachers' responses suggested the need for clarification or for additional ways of eliciting the desired facts and perceptions. Questions were not necessarily asked in sequence. The interview was entered at various points with different teachers, depending on the context of the interview and on modifications resulting from previous interviews. One outcome of the study is a revised interview format; an annotated version is included in the Appendix.

The interviews lasted from about one-and-a-half to two hours. They were given during October and November to establish a platform for observation and further interaction with the teachers. The interview included the following major categories of questions on: (1) the teacher's relationships in the school and the framework of support he or she makes use of in developing curriculum, including the contribution of the general atmosphere of the school; (2) and (3) the previous year's curriculum in some particulars and the present year's curriculum in detail, with emphasis on the teacher's planning, organizing and introducing of the curriculum; (4) general questions.

Certain experiences with the interview reflect in large ways upon the study topic and are thus part of the study data. An important part of the interview was the section on the teacher's relationships with other teachers. The existence of interaction and relationship had already been established as part of the study's history, and was quite visible in the schools. The interview was expected to establish the teacher's perceptions and descriptions of the facts of collegial interaction, and to reveal the teachers' awareness of interaction and relationship as a stimulus to their thinking about ways of adapting the flexibilities and possibilities of the environment to their specific children and interests.

This expectation presumed teachers' remembrance of prior stages of implementation, and recognition of the relationship between their current adaptations and the history of organizational developments that made adaptations possible. The teachers' initial responses, however, suggested both that the questions were too-narrowly referenced to evoke this remembrance and recognition, and that the teachers' immediate concern with their current situation and efforts was their first frame of response. It was apparent that the questions suggested that teachers' daily interaction was the sole determiner of the atmosphere and character of possibilities, whereas the reality is that interaction is not simply a one-to-one exchange but a context of meaning built up by many kinds of relationships within the school over a period of years, a context that gives different meaning to even small, seemingly incidental exchanges. What was needed, it became apparent, was not just an account of the daily exchanges but a sense of the teachers' multiple relationships, with the principal, with parents, with the generations of classes and with the history of the school.

Moreover, the fact of interaction with other teachers--something that had existed only minimally when teachers worked in isolation in the traditional classrooms--was no longer seen by the teachers interviewed as a *new* development supporting their work. Though their subsequent descriptions and observations indicated considerable relationship and interaction, speaking from their current concerns and efforts, the teachers described the need for *more*. Such responses were inadvertently evidence that the teachers are active participants in the school and that they recognize relationship and interaction as what can support their growth and work. In this sense, they confirmed how much the school in fact had changed.

The interview, however, needed to be stronger in reminders to the past, of school life in traditional classrooms and at the beginning of Open Corridors, because in this perspective the present situation becomes visible as full of relationship and possibility. Follow-up probing for relationships was considerably extended in the actual interviews beyond what had been planned. Additional questioning was intended to break through the narrow reference of the planned questions and the teachers' concentration on the present. *In the rationale of the program and the study, this breaking-through process was desirable, contributing to the development of practice as well as the collection of data.*

Responses to questions about how children's interests affected the teacher's curricular choices also revealed some inadequacies and incompleteness in representing, in the actual questions, the rationale and understandings underlying the study. The interview asked specifically about the teacher's organizing curriculum "theme," in most cases a combination of environmental and social studies. These themes were chosen by the teachers, but of course related to children's interests in the sense that they were about topics of pervasive human and certainly child interest--the way people live, building, myth, etc.

Here again, however, both the questions and the context of response influenced responses in the direction of descriptions that were narrower than later observation and interaction revealed the teachers' practice to be.

The questions about children's interests *assumed* an organization of curriculum that allowed for multiple paths, pace and style of attachment by children, and that assumed teachers' accommodation and planning around these variations. Though teachers were in fact relating to children's interests broadly, their immediate *awareness* in responding was of their own interests and of the more ephemeral of children's interests, such as the rage for peashooting that led briefly to pea-planting in one classroom. The frame of the questions was not broad enough to elicit the teachers' thinking about children's developmental interests in their planning, especially in relationship to their reminiscence of childhood interests. Moreover, in the history of the program, the teachers' concentration and priority had been on developing an overall organization and curriculum that would increasingly release children's learning styles. The teachers' refinement of this by relating it to serious reflection on a child's deeper interests has been a relatively late development, though it does exist.

A related difficulty with the interview questions was that focus on the organizing theme led to incomplete description from the teacher of the ways in which other curriculum areas such as math and language had been related to the main theme. That math and language could be and were so related was taken for granted both by the interviewer and by the teachers. The interview assumed that the teachers' arrangements allowed children to work at multiple levels and in various ways so that, for example, some children might be using concrete materials for math while others were using paper and pencil. In the absence of questions specifying this, some of the context for the teachers' individualization of work and consideration of continuity over time was not clearly elicited on the interview. The observations, and further interactions with the teachers and other program participants, were helpful in filling out the picture offered by the interviews.

THE OBSERVATIONS

The purposes of the observations were several: to provide basic contextual information about the schools, classrooms, teachers and curriculums; to bring out instances of continuity in the actions of teachers and children; and to, by interaction, sample children's awareness of connections of various kinds. As planned, the observations were an important complement to the interview. In one classroom, for example, the teacher's use of children's memories was observed to be much stronger than what she had described on the interview, where her reference was to distinguishing for the children that they were now older and different. The actual continuity underlying her stress on difference as well as her use of children's memories more broadly was clear in the observations.

The cycle of observations in each room began with an all-day observation in which basic information such as floor plan, displays and resources, and schedule of the day, was gathered. On other days, the observer noted classroom life, paying special attention to the teacher's exchanges with children on curriculum: how he or she explained new materials or activities; how he or she responded to children's comments and puzzlements, and so forth. The observations included the teacher's meetings with the whole group of children at which the teacher introduced or otherwise discussed major curriculum themes. Scheduled "choice" or "work" periods in which the teacher planned for children to work on major curriculum themes were observed.

Other observations focused on the corridors of the school, on displays, floor arrangements, light, traffic patterns, the variety of activities in the corridor, the flow of movement between classes and in use of the corridor, etc. Some observations of big school events were made. Informal contacts between teachers were noted. Comments of other teachers and resource people were written up.

Observations were naturalistic and resulted in narrative records. The verbatim detail of these records varied quite widely. Observations of class meetings, for example, were as much as possible verbatim transcriptions, with contextual descriptions of some detail. During activity times and when the observer was "floating" between classes, observations included both momentary and verbatim anecdotes of children at work, and more generalized descriptions covering a sweep of activity or response, with emphasis on interconnections and relationships.

The observations were also interactive when this seemed inappropriate. Children were asked to explain what they were doing, to comment on it, to relate it to other experiences the might have had, and so forth. Questions were also directed to the teacher at suitable moments, to clarify his or her intentions or to add background to what had been observed.

The observations had been planned to occur in two periods of intense documenting. Actual observing was spread evenly through the year. Each classroom was observed an equivalent of approximately 3-4 days. Additional time spent in the schools observing corridor activity, talking to the principal, attending special events, amounted to about five days per school. Observations in the 1st-2nd grades for a separate study, contributing to the observer's awareness of school ambience and curriculum work, took ten days.

Scheduling problems were one of the influences in the shift from two intensive periods to an intermittent pattern. Most importantly, however, the first observations suggested that for each classroom certain aspects of the curriculum had been particularly developed (see section 9) as an extension of the teacher's own interest and style. It was these aspects of the curriculum that promised to show particularly the development of possibilities for connection and continuity, and certainly the teacher's awareness and use of these possibilities. Therefore it was important to observe the classrooms at times when these aspects were strongly represented, and observations were scheduled accordingly.

OTHER DOCUMENTARY MATERIAL

A number of the teachers made it a practice to keep "class books" of their children's work--writing, drawings, plans, photographs, and so forth--on the curriculum theme. These books were available in the classroom for the children's use, and some of them were xeroxed or photographed for the study. Photography of displays of children's work and of activities was done in a selective way. Other material such as the teachers' descriptions for parents of the class curriculum were also collected.

The interviews, observations and other documentary material gathered for the study is, like all the Center's documentation, available for serious study at the Workshop Center.

ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF INFORMATION AND REFLECTION

A second interview with the teachers in each school was part of the original plan. It was planned to be a group interview at which instances of the teachers' practice selected from the observations, and questions raised by the first interviews would be presented for the teachers' joint discussion and reflection. The group interview was supplanted by a set of activities that not only provided richer and more varied information than could have been expected from the more restricted format of a group interview, but was more integral to the needs of the teachers and the development activities of the Center. This modification resulted, of course, from the study's location within the program.

One unanticipated form of interaction and reflection was the weekly planning meetings held by the three teachers in one school and two workshops they did at the Workshop Center on their curriculum. Notes of several of these meetings and workshops provided some of the data for which the group interview had been planned. The workshop presentations not only supplied additional information about the teachers' work (indeed, each time new aspects of the work came out) but the review of their work also prompted the teachers to a number of reflective remarks on it and on their working relationship. The Center's documentation also included a tape of a workshop the teachers had given the previous year, which added perspective on the continuity of their work.

Meetings in both schools on continuity and long-range planning resulting from Theodora Polito's work included the study teachers. These meetings were another source of the reflection that the group interview was to have provided. An additional occasion for reflection was the Center's Spring Institute. The morning's talk by Eleanor Duckworth, on breadth and depth in children's learning, was followed by several discussion panels. One of these, a panel of experienced teachers, including one of the teachers in the study, followed up on the morning's discussion by considering one of the main points emerging from the study: that changes in the schools over the years had in various ways released teachers to express their own personal interests in the curriculum they presented in class.

In two instances where the accumulated data required some specific follow-up, short informal discussions with the individual teachers were arranged. Throughout the year, discussions with advisors, who were familiar with the classrooms, principals and children, offered additional information, perspective and reflection on the classrooms and schools.

5: Analyzing and interpreting the documentary material

The interviews, observations and discussion material were analyzed in ways appropriate to their descriptive nature, and to the study purpose of returning emergent insight immediately to practice as well as of suggesting directions for additional study. Because of the study's relationship to the Open Corridor-Workshop Center program--resulting in a strong emphasis on internal development of the program--the search in interpretation was not for comprehensiveness nor exhaustiveness, but for suggestiveness. Insight and understanding, possibilities for further growth, were hoped for, rather than closure. Generalizations have been made as a contribution to a more differentiated understanding of curriculum continuity and connection rather than to explain the development of continuity in a causal way or to prescribe an implementation.

Participants in the program and in the study were invited to contribute to the interpretation, lending their perspective and insights. Interaction on the interview and in multiple discussions around the topic by advisors and Workshop Center staff, by experienced teachers and parents, required continual relating of the ideas behind the study to the observations and perceptions being offered by participants. Thus, interpretation was interwoven with the gathering of data and shared the qualities of this process mentioned earlier: participation, responsiveness, and internalization.

Interviews were taped; the tapes were listened to, transcribed, edited by the documentor and then re-read innumerable times. Observations and discussion notes were similarly transcribed and treated. Notes of questions and issues that arose during these processes were kept separately. The material was organized by teacher, and cross-organized according to the six areas of inquiry. At every stage there was sharing and discussion of aspects of the data. Teachers' responses on one or another interview question would be a puzzle or suggest a point related to a previous report or observation by an advisor, and these would be brought up in informal and formal ways for discussion with staff. Pieces of the observations came up for similar conversation: descriptions of how teachers conducted discussions or of the character of the artwork helped consolidate the observations and distill issues of immediate relevance and questions for further observation. The procedures were not "methodical" in the usual sense of being a strict application of a set of operations, but they were thorough. The documentary material has not been exhausted, but neither has it gone uncultivated.

Obviously these processes of analysis and interpretation are guarded by the complexity of context and history in which they are embedded. This context and history are carried in publications and reports cited in the list of documentation and in the perspectives of those who have participated in its development. In particular, as already acknowledged, the fact that the Director participated in all aspects of the study has ensured that interpretation is continuous with the program's purposes and the intent of the study.

Six general areas of inquiry were identified early in the study and served to organize the documentary material for further discussion and presentation in the final report (Alberty, 1978). The identification of these areas emerged from discussion with participants and, through participation, integrated an understanding of the rationale of the program as it influenced the conception of the study. Thus, the areas of inquiry were related to underlying theory and conception and yet were emergent from the actual documentary evidence.

Each "heading" was interpreted inclusively, and pieces of the interviews, observations and other documentation were subsumed to all the "headings" on which they seemed to bear. On reviewing the material assembled in each grouping, it became evident that the area "discontinuity" was not clearly conceived in relationship to the idea of continuity underlying the study and the area "additional continuities and connections" was superfluous. The reasons for revision of these groupings are discussed in Parts Four and Five. The more formal description of the remaining headings and the kinds of reference included in each are given below:

1. *Evidence of awareness of the whole school. References that indicate awareness of the history of development of an atmosphere of support; references to principals, other teachers and adults, children in other classes, general ambiance and school image; to use of the building, flexible scheduling, enrichment programs. Much of the evidence collected in this heading is described in section 6 and problems of awareness in relationship to the whole school are discussed in Part Five.*

2. *Evidence of awareness of people as resources: their existence individually, with personal interests and expertise that contribute to the school community as a whole, not just to classroom or curriculum. References that indicate the teacher's self-perception as expert or resource for others. References to the teacher's personal interests as these figured in the classroom.*

3. *Evidence of awareness of patterns in curriculum content, including the multiple possibilities of a subject, material or resource; the underlying patterns, depth and similarities in structure across content areas; the persisting themes of human concern as organizing elements of curriculum; extensions; planning; resources. Evidence of the teacher's rationale for choosing a particular theme or for organizing certain activities, implying recognition of complexity and various points of entry. The fact of curriculum organization around a main theme.*

4. *Evidence of awareness of the need to match the child's patterns and of what the child already knows or brings with him or her. References to how knowledge of children, specifically or developmentally, influenced the teacher's planning; to how the teacher introduced curricular topics; to the teachers' rationale for curricular organization or emphasis; to the teachers' perception and response to children's interests; etc. Instances of teachers' use of children's memory; of teachers' adjustments in rhythm, focus and provision for individual children. Evidence of the teachers' perception and appreciation of a child as a person.*

PART THREE - STUDY SETTING

6: The schools, principals and teachers

Basic information and description of the actual circumstances of the classrooms studied offered in this section are based on and illustrated by excerpts from the observations and from informal interaction with parents, principals, teachers and children. The descriptions by no means convey the full reality nor exhaust the descriptive potential of the observations. Many other descriptions of Open Corridor classrooms and curricular work have been published (see the bibliography) and are available to supplement the skeletal framework provided here.

The descriptions absorb much of the data collected about relationships and interaction in the whole school. Open Corridor changes intended and provided for the emergence of relationships and interaction. The study observations and interviews document the particularity of relationships and ways of interaction that have developed. The descriptions of this present the impact of these relationships on the dynamic of teachers' decision-making and of their ability to exercise their interests, discussed in Part Four.

* * * * * * *

The two schools are community elementary schools drawing children from the diverse cultural and ethnic groups that comprise the upper west side of Manhattan. One school has about 700 children and 34 teachers; the other has about 900 children and 40 teachers. Both schools include Open Corridor classrooms, bilingual and traditional classrooms. Some classrooms, including one of the study classes, are both open and bilingual. Few of the classrooms are traditional in the strict sense of the word, since the changes in the schools over the years--including the easing of the institutional rules and the blurring of boundaries between programs, the educational concern of the principals, the enrichment by special programs and whole-school projects--have tended to encourage "small changes" that represent adjustments to children's needs and styles in all the classrooms.

The Open Corridor program has been functioning continuously in one school since 1969 and in the other since 1970. The Corridor program was initially sought by parents who were very active and interested in making some organizational changes in the schools that would make the schools more supportive and responsive to their children's learning. Both principals arrived within a year of the Corridor's inception in their schools, as part of the same atmosphere of parent demand and action towards a better school.

The teachers in the school are quite experienced. Four of the study teachers have been teaching for ten years in their current schools. The fifth is a bilingual teacher who has been teaching for six years, all in the same school. Two of the teachers are now teaching mixed-grade 5-6 classes; two are teaching grades 3-4; and one has a mixed-grade 3-4-5. All have taught other grades in elementary school. Only two of the teachers in the study have had much experience with non-Corridor settings. Before coming to their current assignments, three had taught briefly in other schools, generally in a somewhat different way:

> *"I was teaching a few years before I started taking trips with the kids. We were doing a curriculum on transportation--there was a time when I was happy there were curriculum guides--and I had been feeling that there was something a little bizarre about learning transportation in the classroom."*

The atmosphere in both schools is warm and welcoming. In the morning, principals or their assistants are frequently at the entrance, greeting children and guiding traffic. During the day, parents serve as receptionists, and visitors move in and out of the school with ease. Conversation flows in Spanish and English. The schools are not only welcoming, they are lively. Their liveliness is not simply a sum of what goes on in each classroom or of separate activities, but is a presence that manifests itself in a variety of ways. The arrangement of classrooms to promote interaction the involvements of teachers in activities beyond their classrooms, the contributions of parents, the principals' active leadership in educational matters and support for the teachers, the enrichment of many special programs, are taken to be part of the character of these schools as communities of people with intense, energetic engagement in learning (learning considered as inquiry and as knowledge) and in helping children learn. Basic to this character is relationship between people and for this reason the corridor itself, the connecting link, is both symbolically and in reality significant of the life of the school. The many uses of the corridor, the many small acts of conversation in Spanish and English, and of concentration, the expansive displays that are intended to communicate as well as decorate, the constant in-and-out of classrooms--these and other aspects of corridor use contribute and attest to the emergence of the relatedness of people in the school.

* * * * * * *

HALLS

The halls in both schools are more than conduits. For children and adults they are a major way of knowing what is going on in the school and of access to other people. Children in groups and individually move frequently and easily through the halls and children's natural behavior, including conversation in Spanish and English, is accepted within the constraints of respect for the communal space. The observations showed children using the halls for painting, for report-writing, for consultation and planning with each other. A group of children would be involved in putting up a display. A child might read alone, visit with friends from another class during a work period, play games. Teachers conversed with visitors and colleagues in their doorways, or walked to a neighbor's room to share a piece of work or poked their heads out to see how some children's work in the hall was coming, or conducted small-group work sessions outside the room. I saw tutoring of individual children as well as a whole-class performance of a play in the hall. Mural-making and robot-building went on in the hall. A boy with a long part to learn for a class play spent hours rehearsing it while walking up and down the hall.

Children in the halls are alert to what is going on in the school. They gain from the halls a knowledge of the school that goes well beyond their immediate classrooms and obviously helps them feel a part of the school as a whole. They respond with interest to questions or comments. They can tell visitors where to go, where to find so-and-so, or what the class schedule down the hall is. They are used to visitors.

> Waiting in the hall to see the teacher, I asked several children down the hall if they knew when her group (which was in group meeting) would be free. The kids raced down the hall to check it out, but I explained I didn't want to interrupt the meeting. They said--'Oh, it's all right. They always do that.'
>
> 3rd floor corridor: As I came up a girl sitting outside __'s room said 'I saw you in Miss __'s room.' It turned out she had gone by and seen me; she'd been in __'s class last year and checks it out occasionally.

Children who relate with difficulty to any one classroom develop relationships with other adults, and the halls are of course a place in which such relationships occur. Friendships and relationships across classrooms exist through intervisitation at off moments of the day and during work periods, at lunch and yard times if schedules coincide, through the errands arranged by adults to distribute newspapers or carry messages, through participation in special programs, all of which involve overlap in the halls.

As an aspect of their communal nature, the halls have a role in curriculum development. One teacher remarked thoughtfully and appreciatively that one positive element of a previous curriculum project had been that, in marching through the halls with model airplanes to test in the yard, his class had given public visibility to the curriculum. Hall displays in Spanish and English make other educational use of the hall possible, and are a prominent feature of curricular life in the school. They consist almost totally of work done by children and they offer opportunities for children and teachers to share and comment on each other's work.

> In the hall, a small group of children from __'s class: one kid begins reading the display of another class's "African Pen Pals" letters and comments disblievingly about one of the letters in which the author says he was born in 1968 and is 4 feet tall. The kids start discussing who was how tall at what age (year)....

Some displays are in glassed cabinets and these tend to be more permanent and to date from previous years. Bulletin boards outside classrooms are often formally decorated with examples of work children have done on a particular theme. In addition, the hall is used for display of current work-in-progress, mounted more informally though carefully along the tile walls around the classroom doors or around the entrance hall of the school. A set of children's work may also be mounted in odd corners of the school far removed from the classroom of origin. It is in part through these displays that certain continuities in curricular interest throughout the school are visible and are spread.

> The hall outside R's and T's room has huge scroll-like hangings on which children have written and decorated their own made-up myths. I had asssumed these were from R's room, as part of their imaginary-world study and reading theme on myths, but today I asked a child from T's room about them and she said they belonged to the class next to hers, another one entirely.

*

> The halls outside of B's room have displays of work from her neighbor's class--an imaginary island and mountain environments for imaginary creatures the children had made up--subjects close to work going on in B's room.

In the halls too are evidences of the many special programs and activities that are going on in the school. Throughout the school child-made signs in Spanish and English welcome the new dance consultant, newspaper articles about her work in the school and announcements of her private concerts are posted. Signs for parent activities, for after-school programs, and many other activities are kept current on bulletin boards and walls and reflect the multi-cultural interests of the school community. The entryways of both schools feature colorful displays of children's work, photographs of performances, etc.

SCHOOL ARRANGEMENTS

The two schools share some features of organization associated with the Open Corridor. As a structure to mitigate the isolation of teachers and to encourage their interaction, where none had existed, teachers who were interested in working in a flexible, responsive way had been grouped together to encourage interaction between them and their students. Though some corridor groupings in the schools are still strong, many are not as unified as they were at the beginning of the program. Teachers relate across corridors, grades and other divisions. In part, budget cuts resulting in firing of teachers have served to encourage this by breaking up long-established and close corridor groups.

Lunch periods--historically the time for Corridor meetings with advisors--continue to be used for meetings that require more extended planning or touching-base with one another. Most such meetings are held in classrooms, where teachers incidentally see each other's work and where children wander in casually or work, with permission, on something begun in the morning.

School arrangements and schedule support interaction and can be adapted to teachers' requests for particular relationships:

> *"I could have moved to the third floor, next to (the collaborating teachers), if I wanted, but I find the third floor depressing. There isn't enough light. I love my room here, I love the tree outside the window."*

*

> *"I have a nice working relationship with my next door neighboor. It's perfect for me and I think it works well for him, too. We have an exchange of two adults. When we need to we can go freely in and out of each other's classrooms. The children can come in and out of our classrooms." I had asked to be placed next to my neighbor again this year, and also asked if he could be assigned to the Lincoln Center program along with me so we could work together. The principal agreed, and "it's worked out beautifully."*

*

> *"I'll stop into __'s room in the morning and say, 'Listen, I ran off this rexo, do you think you want it?' We follow the same schedule during the day, and we connect each morning on what's happening for the day. Today I showed the Eskimo film from the Workshop Center and __ is showing it tomorrow, but he wanted to know what time I was showing it. People come in and ask to borrow things too--that happens a lot."*

TEACHER INVOLVEMENT WITH OTHER ADULTS AND WITH THE WHOLE SCHOOL

Teachers' involvement in the school extends far beyond their classrooms and children. Among formal and informal direct interactions and relationships between adults are: all-staff meetings; long-range planning meetings with the principal and advisor; lunchtime meetings of bilingual teachers; spring discussions of placements for the coming year; weekly planning meetings between the teachers collaborating on a common curriculum; informal lunch meetings among several teachers and resource people; informal lunch meetings among friends; teaching in each others' rooms; in-passing spontaneous planning meetings with resource people, librarian, cluster teachers, custodians, etc.; overlapping use of the gym by two classes; teacher intervisitation to borrow materials, show off a piece of work, etc.; teacher representation on an advisory panel to a learning disabilities program in the school; teacher participation in various enrichment programs; informal contacts in the community as a result of living in it; etc. Obviously such interactions and relationships have a range of content from personal and social to professional. Most frequently and necessarily, these went together.

In addition to direct interactions with each other, teachers have many indirect sources of information and knowledge about other people in the school and about what is happening in other rooms: halls displays; performances to the whole school of a class production; activities in the hall by any class; passing observation of other rooms while the door is open; description and comment about classrooms and people from cluster teachers, resource people, other teachers, parents whose children had been or were in other rooms, children themselves, the principal, the advisor, etc. Children themselves are a big source of information and acquaintance, however slight, with other teachers and rooms. The children have been in other classes, and remember their experience, or they have siblings in other rooms with whom they share confidences and whom they visit.

Teachers also relate actively to the school beyond their classroom in a variety of ways. Some, for example, participate voluntarily in out-of-classroom activities for children:

> (A teacher) is doing a slide show from her recent trip to China at the school this evening. In the school entrance are signs announcing her presentation and also a reunion of one of her former classes. This class had hosted the Chinese Ping Pong team when it first came to the U.S., and was written up in the newspaper (an article the teacher had taken with her to China). Now she was inviting her former students back to see the slides.

*

> (A teacher) is coordinating the school's participation in a city-wide storytelling contest for children. She said she felt it was important for the kids to have this experience, and railed somewhat at the restrictive format that requires kids to memorize a story word-for-word rather than improvise in traditional storytelling fashion. The kids come to her room during lunch period several days a week to rehearse; this will go on for another two months.

Teachers continue to be interested in their students' progress after they leave the class. They maintain contact through whole-school activities, through interaction with their colleagues who have received their students, and by encouraging children to make return visits. Children who have gone on to junior high find ready welcome, and return frequently.

> At the evening performance by the 5-6th grade of 'Uncle Vanya,'__ kept squeezing my arm in excitement, exclaiming over the kids she had had in kindergarten--how much they had developed, or how consistent their style was. All the teachers around me *loved* the

performance; everybody was high over the kids' achievement.

*

> A boy, now in junior high, whom __ had had in 4-5-6th grade, came into the room. __ was delighted to see him, greeted him with an adult handshake and then a caress. He joined the class for the morning. She told me later he had been a great problem to start with, very behind academically...but he made great strides and was now doing all right in junior high.

Many of the teachers and both principals live in the community, within walking distance of the school; some have sent their children to these schools. One of the study teachers said that her close professional relationship with another teacher in the school had begun when her child had been in that teacher's class. The families of children and teachers are neighbors. On several occasions during the study, walking home with a teacher, greetings would be exchanged with a young adult whom the teacher would introduce as a former student.

PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN WHOLE-SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Since helping bring the Corridor to the school, parents have continued to be active in its function and development. Parents of course help out in classrooms as the teacher invites it but they also contribute independently to the school's activities. In the past, parents have run resource programs, played host to visitors, documented curriculum, etc. During this year, parents in one school, for example, arranged a lavish luncheon of Hispanic dishes to follow a presentation of Hispanic dances. Children, teachers, parents, the principal, visiting performers and some officials from the Community School District offices downstairs mingled in the Parent Resource room over heaped plates. On a quite different occasion, parents in the other school prevented delivery of a second standardized reading test from the Central Board of Education, required because of a test-maker's mistake. Both occasions reflected the characteristically strong parental participation in the life of the school, particularly in its curricular life. (For other descriptions of parent activity, see *Notes*, Dec. 1972, Dec. 1973, Dec. 1975 and Winter 1978.)

An example of the sense of community among parents, principals and teachers was a big end-of-the-year surprise "graduation" party thrown for one of the parents who had been active in the school for many, many years, on the occasion of the graduation of her youngest child from the school.

PRINCIPALS' CONTRIBUTION AND SPECIAL PROGRAMS

The principals in both schools came with an understanding of parents' desires for better education and an expectation of contribution to that. They are educational leaders as well as administrators, and their own interests are expressed in the character of the schools. Both principals spend a great deal of time out of the office, visiting classrooms, talking to children and parents. They know their schools, their teachers, their children. They will adapt their arrangements to the educational needs teachers express and the teachers recognize the principals as supporting their work.

> *Other things that make work in the school possible. "The principal doesn't come at me with silly nonsense. I realize a certain amont of insanity goes along with the school because it's a bureaucracy. I'll mumble and scream about it; but naturally you have to do it. And sometimes the principal has to be the bearer of bad news. You have to expect that. Also, I would expect him to hold me accountable if I were really transgressing the norm. But as long as I am really doing the best I can--and I am re-evaluating myself constantly--as long as I have the interests of the children and the school at heart, then he lets me be a* teacher.... *He does come into the room, quite a bit. And my kids will go and get him if they want to show him something and he's free, or if they feel mad about me they'll go and complain.... He inquires as to what I'm doing. He comes in and talks to the children. I get feedback. If you feel you are doing a fairly sincere and commendable job, you need to hear it back, and what he gives me is enough when I need it. And I know that if I'm really stuck, I can go to him and we can talk about it."*

In their educational practices--for example, on suspension, on promotion, on testing--the principals struggle for humane solutions that treat children with dignity and have an educaional rather than administrative rationale.

On matters more narrowly related to curriculum, the principals are interested in creating space for teachers to develop and urge development by supporting collaborative work, special projects, by releasing teachers for workshops or training. by arranging for special materials, etc.

> *"The principal has asked for our help with an afterschool program he's running, help in developing curriculum for it, so that it amounts to legitimizing us. And if other teachers become involved in this then eventually they'll feed backto us. I mean at this point we're in the position of getting other people to start and once they do, in, say, a different aspect of what we're working on, then it comes back to us. The administration is drawing us into other aspects of the school, it's connecting us to other teachers. He comes up with things outside of the usual channels of school funding--books, materials, sports programs. He's helped with the printing of the neighborhood maps we're using. It's a combination of specifics--some of them seemingly minor but they add up--and then a general tone of support. Basically we're on our own, and that's the way it's always been. I think in most schools that's the best you can expect, noninterference. But in this case it seems to go beyond that, which I'm happy with."*

Both principals have brought in many curricular enrichment programs and have made the many adjustments of arrangement necessary for these programs to function. The list of curricular programs working in the schools is lengthy: G.A.M.E., Inc.; Teachers and Writers Collaborative; Jazzmobile; the Bloomingdale House of Music; the Lincoln Center program; Tiorati; an African exchange program; Learning-to-Read-through-the Arts; A.G.E.; District 3 Learning Center; and others. These programs are not only visible in work in individual classrooms, but have a whole-school aspect as well: literary magazines that incorporate the work of children from all classes; performances or films developed through program work with classes and presented to the whole school; trips away from the school for several classes; special events that involve children from more than one class, and that are then documented on bulletin boards or in other publications. The Workshop Center has sponsored whole-school art projects in both schools, in which the principals and many teachers were active participants (Schaffer, 1976).

The principals' commitments and interests in education have impelled them, despite budget cuts in the city of all art, music and other so-called specialist teachers, to find ways of continuing this kind of activity. The curricular enrichment programs are only one instance of these interests. Both principals, for example, have assigned teachers who have developed expertise in an area to cluster or specially-funded (e.g. ESAA) in-school positions. Principals' personal and professional interests are also evident in the school. The principal's personal collection of paintings by Puerto Rican artists decorates the halls of one school, and support for art development has included buying sophisticated art books for the teachers and releasing them for meetings with museum educators. A principal with longstanding fascination with organizational aspects of support for teachers has continued to encourage Corridor groupings, some of which still meet weekly and have evolved, for example, ways of helping a teacher transferred from an upper to a lower grade through her transition to the new community.

OTHER ELEMENTS CONTRIBUTING TO WHOLE-SCHOOL CHARACTER

Both schools contain within them organizations that are not strictly part of the school. One school houses the offices of the Community School District, including the District Superintendent. The other school has a special extension of a local junior high school. Both presences can affect the curricular possibilities of the school. For example, the corridors outside the District offices at one point during the year held a display of pastel portraits on black paper that had been done by a junior high teacher and his class in another school. The particular use of pastel inspired one of the study teachers to try some similar work with her children; their dramatic pastels of the circus later decorated the hall upstairs and the principal's office. In the other school, some interrelationships between the junior high and elementary classes have grown up.

THE CURRENT WORK OF THE ADVISOR IN THE STUDY SCHOOLS

The two schools have had continuous assistance from advisors who were regularly-assigned to them and who worked in a variety of ways directly in classrooms and elsewhere in the school (see *The Open Education Advisor, 1975*). The development of advisory relationship with these schools, particularly with respect to the emergence of experienced teachers, has been quite thoroughly discussed in other documentation (reviewed in the anniversary issues of *Notes*, 1977-78.)

A new arrangement of advisory assistance was instituted this year, acknowledging the emergence of experienced teachers and self-sustaining capacities in the study schools. Direct assistance to classrooms was shifted to schools just beginning to open up or less experienced, where the advisor worked on a short-term basis. In the study schools, the advisor, Theodora Polito, focused on engaging the teachers jointly in more regularized and public consideration of whole-school development. The advisor's work led to the emergence of weekly long-range planning meetings, which will continue without her assistance in the coming year.

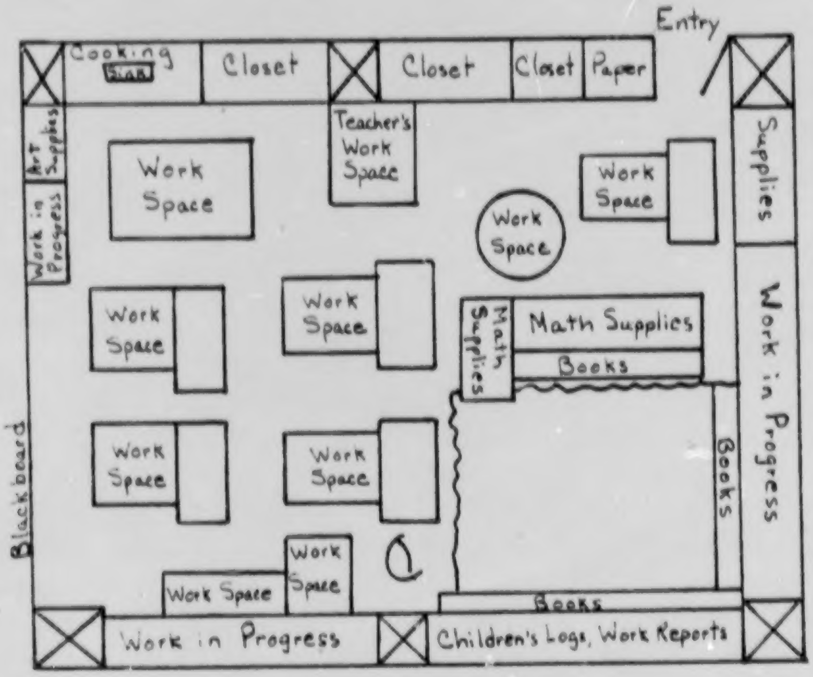
Though advisory work has changed as school situations have matured, relationships between advisors and teachers, principals, children and parents continue and advisors as persons are considered part of the school community and resources.

7: The classes and classrooms

The five classes each included 30 to 35 children. The classes were in mixed-age ("family" or "vertical") groupings, so some children had been in the rooms for one or two years and some looked forward to spending another year with the same teacher. Several classes included siblings. The overlap in ages and grades was instituted in the first years after the Corridor began. It created possibilities for children to see and relate to the prior and/or anticipated levels of understanding and experience represented in the age and grade range, that is, possibilities for continuity and connection.

The classes were also heterogeneous in comprising a variety of ethnic and racial groups, and one class in the study was a bilingual class that included children who were learning Spanish as a second language as well as those who were Spanish-dominant or came from Hispanic families. These were circumstances in which children could similarly experience and understand connection and continuity, not in the sense of "sameness" but in the deeper sense of "variation." The classes were also academically untracked.

Arrangements of furniture and space within the classrooms were informal so as to support variation in the kinds of activities and to allow individual, small-group and whole-class work. The floor plan on the next page illustrates a typical upper-grade classroom. In some rooms, the arrangement was changed several times during the year--in one case, at the urging of the children--and in other classrooms the arrangement was stable. Although children were assigned seats at desk groupings, the assignments were typically switched around during the year. At various times the desk groupings became workspaces and children worked in groups determined by their activities and social relationships rather than by desk assignment alone. Such flexibility was another basis for fluid connection and reconnection between children. The classroom space is no longer clustered into math, science, reading, art and other areas that existed in previous years and is still prevalent in lower-grade classrooms. The arrangement



is of one desk per child but at this age level it is assumed that children may have their own ideas about environment and can restructure for their own use.

The classrooms generally had distinct libraries, an area set aside specifically for bigger project work, and an adjacent arrangement of some open and closed storage of materials and three-dimensional work. Other materials were stored in built-in cabinets around the room. Even materials in closets, however, were accessible to children, according to classroom procedures that were well-established.

Space for class work was not limited to the classroom. Children had access to other classrooms, to the hall and resource rooms:

> In the hall, the group planning the water-supply system made valiant efforts to continue their planning. They looked through Macaulay's *Underground*, with some digressions on sewage and drainage systems, before they located water supply. They studied diagrams of manholes and valves, especially one in which a worker was opening a valve using a long screwdriver-like thing, inserted through the manhole to the valve. They spoke of making a special screwdriver for the miniature manholes on the Main Street model.... Cross-section diagrams of underground, showing electrical and other service lines, led to speculation on whether crossing lines could create explosions....

*

> The teacher dismisses the fish-dissection group, calling each child "Dr...," and sending him or her into "surgery" down the hall in the resource room. The kids enjoy the imagery enormously.

A big aspect of all the rooms was display--display of work from previous years, display of current work, display of materials relevant to the curriculum and of work-in-progress. Displays in one room were reported early in the year as:

> On the blackboard: A complicated plan of the section of the west side around the school is posted. Next to it is written:
> "Changing City:
> 1) What has remained the same?
> 2) What is *changed* on your: block, neighborhood?
> 3) What do you think the pink, yellow, white rectangles are for?
>
> Also on the blackboard are the daily schedule, assignments and attendance count.
>
> Other displays on walls and shelves:
> "Trees on our block" -- posters and children's drawings of leaves and trees
> Dioramas illustrating stories, some with stories attached
> Roof studies--children's observational drawings
> Brick patterns--children's observational drawings
> Eskimo culture artifacts--children's drawings based on books
> Various posters of NYC, including a long panorama of old NY
> Banners made by children celebrating the school and the curriculum, from previous years
> Indian symbols chart
> Various displays on human anatomy, including a real human skeleton
> Clay projects, including igloos in construction
> A pan of bark, soaking
> A papier mache igloo
> A sewn whale, with harpoon in its side, lying next to one of the clay igloos

Some of the displays remained constant through the year. Most of the classrooms, for example, had work from previous years displayed on the upper walls of the room as part of the teacher's effort to carry over for the children and him or herself the memory of earlier work. Though the displays were generally attractive, the selection and arrangement of work suggested that their primary purpose was not decorative but to carry forward the children's work by creating possibilities for connection between past and current work, between each others' work, between work in different areas, and so forth. The displays were a means to help the children think about what they were doing, a visible support for curriculum.

> I ask the girl if she thinks there's anything else I should know about the curriculum, and she rushes over to the bulletin board outside the room to point out a series of reports by the children

> on Indians, Eskimos, the Dutch, and one by G on glaciers. She explains that she did one on Indians but doesn't know where the teacher has it. She goes along the reports, and comes to one that she identifies admiringly as "T's," going through it page by page to show me the text and drawings.

Sometimes teachers used the displays in their instruction or made a point of new displays for children to look at on their own:

> The teacher introduces the work period by pointing to four newly-displayed maps on the nearby divider. He had asked A, who did them last year, to bring them in as display material in preparation for thinking about underground sewage and water treatment systems for Main Street. He explained how A had done them and suggested the class take a look at the maps in anticipation of other Main Street work..."J, remember you did this (finding the area of the city from maps) last year...?"

*

> E and E have been studying the Scout Manual on how to read maps. The teacher takes them over to one of the topographic maps of NYC on display and shows them the relationship between the symbols and layouts in the Scout Manual and the real map...After about a two-minute explanation of the maps, the boys are on their own and continue studying the display maps for a while: "See, here it goes...."

The informal physical arrangement of the classrooms was matched in scheduling by provision for a variety of different kinds of experiences. A typical schedule for a day was usually written on the blackboard, along with specific assignments for the day and suggested activities that the children might choose for their work periods. In the latter case, the teacher usually asked children directly which of these they would be working on, or what else they would do.

Schedule:
1) Meeting
2) Work period
3) Ms. B (prep teacher covering part of the work period)
4) Work period continues
5) Reading
6) Gym 1:30-2:15
   Daily Journal
   Clean-up
   Meeting

For Today:
1) Follow-up--Jumel Mansion trip
   a) review of trip
   b) drawings
   c) plan model rooms
2) Dutch Gallery Trip Book
3) Data book
4) Complete *mask drawings*
5) Arctic report
6) Research
7) Long division workshop
8) Spelling diagnosis
9) *Ourselves* book - Group B

In such a schedule, long periods of diversified work alternated with shorter periods devoted to specific and whole-class activities such as spelling or gym. During work periods there was an enormous amount of interaction between children and simultaneously an enormous variety of work going on:

> 11:30. Kids break into working groups for "Imginary Environment" activities. Initially they are engaged as follows:
>
> -C is intent on drawing what looks like a story board.
>
> -A and her friends are doing a report on farming. After some independent work at a table, they ask the teacher for permission to go to the library to do some research there on farming.
>
> -R is drawing, across from J. J comments later, about the drawing, "It doesn't have to be perfect."
>
> -J is working over some clay, at first aimlessly. He talks to R about some test he took involving scales, apparently of abilities. He comments on how the test revealed his own talents--which he claims to know already: "Music, sort of, but not poetry...But that's what everybody gets for that answer....But it'd be impossible for a scale to tell what your talents are--these days?" The last is added as if to say that these days are much too complicated and confused for any scale to measure, ridiculing the idea.
>
> -Some girls are involved in a personal story that one of them is recounting. Later, when the teacher goes around to each group, it appears that this group is supposed to be working with J in developing a clay model of an oven for the "Imginary Society"--as part of imagining cooking.
>
> -Another group of girls is neatly gathered around a table with large paper and pencils, putting together a new language and writing lists of other aspects of culture.
>
> -A group of boys in the reading area is working on the large map of the "Imaginary Territory," planning.
>
> -A student teacher is working with a group of boys on sawing, nailing and smoothing out the house structures, trying to fit a too-small thatched roof onto it. They are using a teacher-made drawing and description as model.
>
> -A boy is transferring his sketch of a "surface car" and a "water car" onto a larger piece of paper.
>
> -A spinoff from the woodworking--some boys do small clay objects: a cannon, a flag, a doorway.

Many of these activities obviously involved conversation among children that intermixed personal and social topics with comment and explanation about the work at hand:

> Work period, 10:15-11:30:
> A group of girls including A, S, C and two others work continuously at one table on various projects related to the class's model of Main Street. A is making furniture for her multi-storied disco: what appear to be benches and, finally, a clear tunnel to lead from her building to S's next door, of similar plan and elevation. S is making a windowed-facade like the Opera House at Lincoln Center. Another girl is printing brick siding, using a rubber stamp made of erasers

> into which have been carved brick patterns in various sizes. At times one or two other children join her to cut brick patterns into another eraser. One of the girls reads a novel throughout the period. C spends a good deal of her time making a drawing, apparently a plan for a building she wants to propose....
>
> Conversation among the girls includes topics such as how much money each girl owes to various members of her family. This topic leads to "mothers" and hitting children. A boy who has sat down asks about one girl's relationship to a boy he knows who "thinks he's a great fighter," but isn't....
>
> Later in the period, the teacher calls S over to his table and they work together. The teacher polishes up her facade by cleaning the cuts out and cutting vertical strips to articulate the surface. S helps with this, glues strips on, then herself cuts balsa wood strips to glue on the back of the facade, presumably for support. She and the teacher decide on the window glass....
>
> A finishes her tunnel. She is proud of it and shows it around the room to several people, including the teacher. She returns to the table, sets the tunnel up between her building and S's, and does a little hustle-dance to the words "First tunnel. ..," which she sings....
>
> As A sits down and continues, she introduces the topic of what she needs next, with a speculative tone that invites the others to add. A herself mentions lights; someone else adds stereo and sound equipment; other suggestions are for tables and chairs. A vetos the latter, because, she says, discos don't have tables and chairs. Some friendly argument breaks out based on who's been to a disco and who hasn't. Other suggestions and advice are forthcoming....
>
> At the very end of the period, C has gotten her plans checked by the teacher and seems to need a top view. A draws on the board to illustrate for her what this would look like--first an elevation, then a perspective view from the top, then a simple top view.

In this example, concentration, productivity and cooperation were evidently supported by the possibility of conversation and movement, and by the unhurried pace allowed by the duration of the work period.

During the day, there was also considerable in-and-out of the classroom movement. Children left in pairs or small groups, to run errands for the teacher, to go to the bathroom, to work in the hall alone or with a student teacher, to visit the cluster teacher, etc. Children also came into the room from other parts of the school, delivering messages or the daily newspaper, requesting materials for a neighboring teacher, visiting their former classroom or a sibling. Teachers and other adults went in and out of the room, though less frequently than did children. During a morning, one classroom was visited as follows:

> In-and-out of the classroom during the afternoon work period:
> -D, a 7th-grader, coming back to visit.
> -A new girl is brought in to join the class.
> -Visiting parent and preschooler come to do interviews.
> -Another teacher, to get materials and show off a collage one of her kids did.
> -A second teacher, to ask whether the planet filmstrip will be shown in the room (she wants to send one of her kids).
> -Kids from another class, to distribute science books.
> -The person in charge of supplies, to check on the science books.
> -Librarian, to speak to the teacher about some children.
> -Kids from another room, to see the filmstrip.
> -Some kids from the room go out on a trip to (?).
> -Various kids with newspapers, messages, etc.
> -Observer.

Within an activity period, the teacher worked in a variety of ways: conducting small conferences about aspects of the class's curricular work with groups of children; answering questions; going over more formal assignments with individual children; conducting small-group reading or math sessions; spot checking individual work, offering help here and there, and with observation of how individual children are coming along.

> After some 15 minutes of work, the teacher begins going around from one group to the other with a notebook, going over plans and progress. She tells the group that next week *they'll* play the role of elders, using the rules that have been drawn up for the "Imaginary Society" to observe during the work period, reporting infractions, etc. She gets the cooking group more involved in the model-building, telling them how to do it, and then raises questions that they should be thinking about as part of the new Society's cooking--e.g., taboos in cooking, stories around cooking--"Like in our society you have to be 18 or 21 to drink liquor."

Teachers also used the activity-work periods to talk briefly with each other or with other adults in the room, for example, with a student teacher.

Though these periods were obviously the meat of the day as far as the organizing curricular theme was concerned, they were generally introduced and concluded with whole-group sessions. These sessions might be: formal presentations or consolidations of a new point the teacher thought the children needed --in math or spelling, for example; discussion about some aspect of the curriculum; "touching-base" reviews of where different children were in their work; explorations of the social or personal aspects of the children's classroom life, and so forth.

> After clean-up, when all the children are at their desks, the

teacher shows them the latest write-up in the class book. He asks whose plans are ready to go before the Planning Board, but says it may not meet today as only 3 of 5 members are present. Most of the class wants to return to the room to work during lunch and the teacher goes around the room asking each one what he/she wants to work on. He indicates that he is glad they want to work, but reminds them that it's his lunch hour too.

*

Before lunch, the class reassembles to report on the morning's activities, which have been in conjunction with several staff from Tiorati. The meeting lasts about an hour:

There have been many comments about the fishy smell from the fish dissection, and some giggling and fantasy-repulsion expressed about the fish parts. One of the boys most eager in the dissection says to the group: "I wish this had happened after lunch instead of before." The teacher begins the meeting by saying she doesn't think she could eat fish today, evoking pleasurable groans of play-disgust and agreement from the children.

Discussion starts with the fish dissection group, whose report takes most of the period. Teacher: "I'm sure the fish people are just itching to tell what they did." One of the boys scratches himself vigorously all over. Each member of the fish group holds up his/her dissected fish organs and tells about them. Heart: "It looks like the meat you get in rice and beans," comments a member of the group....

Teacher asks many questions about the gills...The kids are again full of information and eager to impart it. Teacher: "Remember last year when we were studying the human body? What cleans out the air you breathe?" She and the class compare the gill filaments with nostril mucous and hair....They similarly compare the fish lungs to chicken lungs dissected last year. Oxygen is distributed through the fish by the blood, just like in the body. The teacher reminds them that last year they compared the blood to a train, moving the oxygen around. A child pipes up: "The Blood Express," apparently the name they had given it.

Turning the questions around, the teacher asks whether fish can die of pollution and how. The class concludes this can happen when the gills get too full of "gunk." "Could we die of pollution?" the teacher asks. The conclusion is we could.

A child tells about how "One of my fish swallowed a rock..." and the deadly consequences. Another child gives the example of her brother's snake, who needs to eat *live* goldfish. Thus,

> her brother has to keep the goldfish alive, "but once a goldfish died because the water was too dirty...."

For some children, the day was interspersed with individual or small-group sessions out of the classroom, or with participation in some school-wide activity with representatives from other classes.

8: The study curriculums

As in the previous sections, the description offered here is not a comprehensive account of all the activities undertaken in each classroom, their origin, sequence, and so forth. Indeed, the study curriculums were of such complexity that a full account would require a great deal more space than is possible. Instead, the description below is intended to suggest the typical planning and organization of the curriculums

The umbrella curriculum theme in which the three teachers in one school collaborated was on architecture and comparative culture. The theme was continued from the previous year and had many extensions into science, literature, environmental and urban studies, art and design. In the second school, one teacher had chosen American Indians as a main theme, and undersea life as a science theme and had, in the course of developing these, arrived at the underlying idea "adaptation to the environment." The fifth teacher had chosen "fantasy, myth and legend" as a leitmotif running through an emphasis on opera and study of Africa, both enriched by her class's participation in special programs. All of the themes emphasized relationships between things both in content and in organization. The relationships in content will be discussed in section 10. Here, the description of how curriculum organization supported making connections and relationships will give background to that discussion.

In some classes the theme was organized around several large-scale activities to which the whole class contributed in one way or another. These large-scale activities had smaller, preparatory activities or were broken into smaller units on which individuals or small groups worked. For the model of Main Street in one classroom, one child or a pair of children first made up and wrote out plans for a building they wanted to construct, submitted these plans to the class's Planning Commission and got them approved, built and installed the model. The process could take a very long time, depending on how the child scheduled it, and could involve many subsidiary activities and relationships with other children. In other classes, the activities were more successive, often developing organically from one another within the teacher's overall plan. A whole class was involved over the same period of time in doing research projects on Eskimo life. Sometimes each child would have one or two aspects of the subject to look at; sometimes all the children would cover the range of aspects.

Trips were a very prominent feature of the study curriculums and often a focal point for extended work. The classes of course visited museums, historic monuments and other big points of interest around the city. But classes also toured the neighborhood, studying and recording details of architecture, "Broadway characters," an empty lot, the school building itself. The trip emphasis was part of a general emphasis on the part of the study teachers on the use of original source materials and concrete activities of all kinds. In studying old New York, one class used a 19th-century book of city maps that another teacher had found on the street one day, and the class's teacher brought in an historian from Holland to talk to the children about his research here.

Planning by the study teachers "began" in the summer preceding school, and was often absorbing and ambitious.

> *"My month of August every year is spent planning. I have a wonderful time. Not that I end up doing half of it, but I have a fantastic time. I buy books. I call all the museums and get all my trips planned. I visit the museums and see what they have to offer. I love it."*

If the theme was being carried over from the previous year, the teachers thought about new ways of organizing it, new aspects they wanted to develop and parallel or subsidiary themes they wanted to have. Several of the teachers included in their summer plans projections of big "marker" events or turning points, usually for the spring term.

When school began the teachers typically announced the theme to the children, discussed with them what they would be doing, and work began.

> *Starting points this year: "I went right into it. I started to read to them about Indians and we started to discuss it, and that was it. The discussion must have started with: 'Remember last year when we learned about Columbus?' and reminders about who Columbus was and about the Pilgrims. That kind of tied it in for some of the kids, because they were doing some of it in previous grades. The first-second grade teacher had done Navajo Indians with the kids."*

Where the theme was carried over from the previous year, work already in the classroom stated its continuation. Children who remained in the class (as many as half) helped in getting the work re-started.

All of the study teachers involved other teachers and resource people in their curriculum planning process, though not necessarily at the same points. The three teachers working together had worked together the previous year, and shared additional planning they had done over the summer before school started. In a fourth classroom, the teacher's planning involved integrating the various curricular programs with which she was working, and part of her planning was in conjunction with the programs. One teacher who made most of her plans before school started continued her planning in meetings with resource people, other teachers, the school librarian, and others, when school began.

Summer planning did not spell out every detail of every week's work. Planning for the week occurred on weekends, for the next big block of time on holidays. Daily planning tended to be in the form of short notes about things the teachers needed to bring in the next day or for a particular child, people they needed to speak to about something, or an idea or term they needed to look up.

The pace of the particular group of children and their joint responses to what was being done determined the further development of the curriculum.

> *"We started doing stuff on Egypt just to introduce the trip we're taking to King Tut and to make it another example of a different culture. But the kids are fascinated and so we'll spend as long as their interest holds."*

As a matter of course the teachers also made adjustments for individual children.

> In a lunch meeting, T asked how R handled it when the kids weren't interested in the research topics she suggested. R said she tells them to choose one of their own, e.g., G didn't want to do any topic she suggested recently and chose to do glaciation instead. T expressed a reservation, wanting the topic not to be too far from what the rest of the class is doing. R said of course she'd asked G to make connections wherever possible, and had also asked him for an outline and helped him focus it in other ways.

The organizing theme of the curriculum created a context in which math, science and reading could exist as real, as connected with real situations and problems and possibilities for solution. Model-building to scale required understanding ratio, conversion and proportion, for example. Research on tools or on other aspects of Eskimo and Indian life required reading, and the teachers supplied many books at a variety of levels to support this research.

Aspects of reading, math or writing were also pulled out for specific focus as the teacher thought was necessary, or were developed parallel to but somewhat separately from the organizing curriculum. One teacher frequently had what she called "mini-workshops" on long division or some other aspect of math during work periods and invited those children who had specific difficulties to join these. Math workbooks were used for practice; assignments were made for the children to complete within a certain time. Two teachers scheduled a whole-class time for math work once a day, in part to assure consistent efforts in this area.

Science work was done in some combination of concrete activity, such as: constructing a turkey skeleton or dissecting a fish; researching human anatomy with reference to books and a skeleton; using science workbooks; reading about animals and environment; studying filmstrips about planets or volcanos; or exploring water level by research and experiment, related to the installation of a water system for Main Street.

Reading pervaded the classrooms not simply as a matter of routine or skill but as a complex and social phenomenon. Reading related to getting information, to discussion, to writing, to drawing and other presentations of experience, and was also a personal activity to be enjoyed for itself privately or with a friend. This variety of relationships to reading was supported by the class library. Assembled by the teachers, the library typically included fiction of all kinds and levels, reference books, dictionaries, and many non-fiction books. The classroom usually also had a few examples of several readers, though they were not used particularly for sequenced work. In the bilingual classroom, the library also included a variety of books in Spanish for reading and for work on the main theme or for reference. Books related to the main curriculum theme were generally kept together on separate shelves. Children brought in books from home to share, and the classes had systems for keeping track of books that children took home. In the bilingual classroom, the reading program additionally included activities planned to support reading and language development in Spanish of children from a range of Hispanic and non-Hispanic backgrounds. The class libraries were of course supplemented by access to the school library.

Around the curricular activity planned and organized by the teacher--the projects on the main theme and the more formal assignments--were "lighter" activities that were often quite unrelated to any of the other work and that served to balance the rhythm of children's concentration and public participation. In one classroom, a passion for chess and checkers emerged early in the year, without any particular influence of the teacher, and continued throughout the year when the children had odd moments of time--before school, after lunch, towards the end of a work period when some children had come to stopping point in their work and others had not. Reading, crocheting or weaving, attending to newly-sprouting plants, writing "thank-you's" to another class and journal-writing were among the continuing or occasional activities that counterpointed the longer and more formal project work. Social conversation on all subjects was also an important occupation.

> As the morning goes on, the atmosphere loosens a bit and the work seems to change. It seems to me that there is more writing going on; I notice a number of English and English-Spanish dictionaries in use. Conversations, though not basically distracting from work, flourish for a few minutes here and there, and the room is somewhat noisier than it was earlier. There is, for example, a period of fantasy during which several boys at different tables decide to take the roles of various Yankee players ("I'm Bucky Dent"); one boy takes out a bat and practices his swing for a minute. At another point, the girl, M, comes over to a group of friends and tells them about her molars, which have to be taken out....

PART FOUR - EMERGING CONTINUITIES & CONNECTIONS

In this part of the report are described the points emerging from the analysis of the documentary material initially gathered under the areas of inquiry described in section (5). The discussion represents analysis and interpretation of all sources of information and documentation gathered for the study but because there was so much documentary material and because the interviews provided the baseline of teachers' awareness, examples offered in this section are drawn almost exclusively from the interviews. The exceptions are observations that significantly modified the interview, revealed an awareness *beyond* what the teacher had said, or offered information *not* evoked in the interviews.

9: Personal interests and people as resources

> Genuine interest is the accompaniment of the identification, through action, of the self with some object or idea, because of the necessity of that object or idea for the maintenance of a self-initiated activity.
>
> -John Dewey, *Interest and Effort in Education*, Southern Illinois University Press, 1975, p. 14.

> As Dewey demonstrated with such profundity, true interest appears when the self identifies itself with ideas or objects, when it finds in them a means of expression and they become a necessary form of fuel for its activity.
>
> -Jean Piaget, *Science of Education and the Psychology of the Child*, Viking Press, 1970, pp. 158-9.

TEACHERS' INTERESTS

Perhaps the most striking development in open classroom curriculum observed in the course of the study was the intensity and pervasiveness of teachers' personal connection to the curriculum evolving in their classrooms. The development of the curriculum--its selection, organization, emphasis, activity, extension--seemed in many respects to be a self-expressive activity for the teachers. It involved primarily personal content interests, and also activity perferences and individual styles of organization and approach. Teachers readily acknowledged and took pride in the fact that the classroom reflected them personally. *In this context, the teachers saw themselves personally as the primary resources in building curriculum.*

The possibility of release of teachers' interests had been anticipated and encouraged by the Open Corridor program:

> In preparation of the project, the teachers were asked these questions: what sort of materials they would want, and then, could they figure out a rearrangement of their schedule so that there would be time for using these materials. This was relatively simple, but then a third question involved a bit more thought: what special kind of material they might want that would reflect something that they particularly wanted to do and were willing to share with other teachers....
>
> -Lillian Weber, "Comments from Teachers...,"
> 1978, p. 1.

Obviously, the release that was observed was part of and confirmed the release of teachers' decision-making powers on curriculum, a release intended by Open Corridor changes: but it went beyond decision-making--or rather specified what could be meant by decision-making--in a way that created new possibilities for sustaining and extending those changes. On examination, the release of teachers' interests proved to be enormously complex, worthy of a study in itself.

In the formal classroom, teachers' interests were and are engaged only incidentally. Though one or another topic may correspond to an interest of the teacher, the connection between that interest and the sequenced, simplified, foreshortened presentations prescribed for the children are only minimally evident. The connection between the teacher's interests and those of the children is evoked, at best, only slightly. The children's concerns and interests in the deep sense of their developmental and particular approaches to making sense of the world are not visible. Nor, in the formal classroom, does there exist a way of joining the adult's and the child's interests so that curriculum can be an exploration for both, an unfolding in an orchestrated but unspelled out way of new aspects, new relationships in the content.

In the open classroom, the release of teachers' interests as a framework for curriculum development follows from and is additional to the release of children to learn in ways more natural to them. Historically the release of children was and is supported by Open Corridor organizational changes such as classroom arrangements that permit children's movement; flexible scheduling with blocks of time in which children can work at their own pace; classroom provisioning that allows children to engage in activities concretely and in a variety of ways, and to re-engage in the same activity, material, or idea over a period of time. In this context, children are observably *children*. Their concerns, interests and styles are visible, and can, among other things, evoke adults' memories of what compelled them as children.

The teacher in the open classroom, observing the child and responding to the child's pace and style of learning, is reminded of what interested her as a child and reminded, too, of how those childhood interests have developed into adult interests. Observing the child's block-building, the teacher remembers the constructive impulse and all its attendant fascinations. See the child's love of animals, the teacher remembers, even fleetingly, the thrill of watching small creatures' habits and remembers a dog or cat and the melting quality of caring. In the teacher's life as an adult some of these childhood passions and occupations continue to have fascination--perhaps as interest in architecture or model-building, in pets or birdwatching.

Naturally teachers as adults and people have many such interests. In the open classroom, children's activity and the teachers' efforts to match children's individual patterns of learning evoke for teachers recognition of where their adult interests intersect with the universal interests of children. Flexible classroom organizational structures give teachers the chance to recognize the continuity of their own interests and style with what children do. What teachers described in the interviews as *their* interests was thus what their interests and understandings enabled them to recognize in the children's work. They did not impose on children interests of theirs that were unrelated to children's interests or obviously inappropriate to a classroom. Nor did they teach their adult interests in "architecture" or "animal husbandry" as adult specialties. But their interests in these areas allowed them to *see* the relationship between what the children were doing and their own experience and understandings. From this base, they could and did develop a curriculum that was more in continuity, more connected, to children's interests and patterns of growth.

The interviews revealed that personal interest either determined the theme proper or determined what teachers saw and developed in a topic emergent from other sources. The sources on which teachers drew for their decisions on the main curricular theme were multiple and varied. For one teacher, the choice of her main curricular theme had to do with her perception from the previous year's study of Colonial American that children had "a very negative image of Indians from TV and I wanted to change that as much as I could." For another teacher the theme grew out of a college course on architecture she had taken over the summer. She and two other teachers had already been discussing working together in some way, pooling their expertises, and she proposed architecture as a core. For yet another teacher, the main theme came from analyzing the possible thematic connections existing in the classroom between her work and that of the several special programs with which she was working.

For all of the teachers, however, there was a personal element of interest informing the selection of curriculum theme. This interest was not passing or surface but felt. The teacher who chose Indians had been a history major in college, "love(s) history" and spent her vacations visiting historic sites along the east coast.

> *"People who tell me they hate history--well, I just stare. How could you hate history, it's so fascinating. But they probably sat in schools and had to remember dates. I'm terrible at dates, but I have a feeling about an era. And I think that's what I want to give the kids...."*

The same teacher's choice of the beach and ocean environments for science study came from her own love of the oceanside. The teacher who took the architecture course is herself an artist and the curriculum was directly emergent from this deep interest. For her collaborators, the choice of architecture as a core curriculum flowed from one's interest in building and models and from the other's interests in the richness of New York City environment and in how people live. For the teacher who selected myth and legend, the resonant connection was with the fantasy plots and dialogues of operas. Her personal interests are in music, the performing arts and writing.

These themes were not so different from topics appearing in standard Board of Education curriculum guides; indeed, one of the teachers even drew on the curriculum guides as a resource. But the locus of decision was with the teachers and, because of the teachers' interest and familiarity with the topic and because of the organizational possibilities supporting curriculum development, the themes could be developed more complexly and with more possibilities of connection.

The selection of theme with connection to personal interest meant that the theme usually had continuity with past work the teacher had done. The Indian theme had come out of the previous year's Colonial America study, but in addition the weaving together of science and Indian studies around the central idea of "adaptation to the environment" made connection with the previous year's work in human nutrition and anatomy and even used made-up monsters the children were involved in by discussing how their imagined or real environments might affect their physical features.

Regarding the architecture theme in her room, another teacher said:

> *"Most of what I'm doing I have done in some phase before. I worked with the kids on a fantastic dollhouse one year. In connection with this I had observed with the kids the destruction of a building on the vacant lot.... I brought in the book we had made about the destruction to show this year's class how the building had looked. That gave us information when we went to make our model of Braodway."*

One teacher's emphasis on model-building and environment in the architecture theme connected with previous curriculums on flight and on the pond. Another teacher gave the same theme an emphasis on culture and history consistent with her previous work.

The fact of continuity with past work did not mean the teachers were *repeating* their curriculum. Where the curriculum carried over from one year to the next, there was change and development, more detail and new activities. There were always new aspects of the theme being explored. Where the curriculum was new, continuity with prior projects was obvious in a variety of ways, but the curriculum was never the same. Indeed, one of the teachers with great continuity in her work emphatically expressed her dislike of doing anything more than once.

Continuity with past work meant that the teachers had already developed resources and understanding. Using these as a base, planning and resources could be much richer than would be possible if the teacher were starting anew.

> *"...a lot of things (have developed over the years of her experience): building up my expertise and repertoire of knowledge; seeking out information, not just cramming it in on the fly; doing pre-trips to make trips more considered; planning over a longer period of time; learning how to extend something and why it's important to extend it, that just one encounter with something is not the be-all and end-all of that body of knowledge."*

The connection of the curriculum with their interests was seen by the study teachers as a support for the children's learning. Being interested meant getting excited about the work. Their own enthusiasm for the curriculum was seen as a prerequisite for the children's getting interested:

> *"I think if you're not interested, there's no way you can make the class interested."*

Propelled by their interests the teachers had developed knowledgability and appreciation of the complexities of a field. They inevitably knew more about the subject than what could be presented. They could present the more complex understandings of a curriculum in which they had personal experience to children at a variety of levels and angles. Their knowledgability enabled them to recognize connections and continuities with prior projects and other fields, to make selections, to decide what to offer and not offer and how to offer.

> *"...basically I get excited about something. I bring in lots of material for the kids to see the possibilities of the curriculum, and then start some small activities to develop their sensitivity. I try to offer them as many different angles as I can, like looking at buildings from a photographic point of view, from other artists' points of view. I offer different materials so that if a kid wants to build or make a collage, he can, and so that there are all kinds of ways to see a thing."*

Moreover, knowing the subject personally, the teachers could recognize the child's response--his or her question, not only in the literal sense but in the deeper sense of how the child was conceptualizing the field, what underlying problems in that field she or he was engaging with. The teacher could better select, modify, adapt in flexible response to the children's understandings expressed in activity or in question. The teacher could raise new questions, extend and find new connections for children, from the base of his or her own familiarity with a field. Thus the teacher was in a position to *make* decisions about curriculum, not just the initial decisions about what to study and how to go about it, but continuing decisions about each child's engagement.

The teacher's ability to make original connections of his or her own within the curriculum made it possible for the teacher to share with the children that their activities and interests were related to those of adults, that they were part of the human sphere of concern. Moreover, the presence of teachers' interests made the classroom similar to situations children encountered at home, where parents and other adults were engaged in the world and the child was part of that whole, and participated in it through the parents. The interest of the teacher allowed the child to attach emotionally as well as intellectually to that interest. In connecting with the child's interest in rich ways, the teacher confirmed that the child's own interests were significant and serious, as much a part of learning as reading and math. Thus, the teacher's interest brought the child further into human community rather than isolating him or her. It granted the child status as a whole person rather than as an object of instruction. It thereby supported the child's own continuity and connectedness.

The teachers' personal connection to curriculum released possibilities for developing curriculum in relationship to pedagogical concerns and professional goals important to the teachers. The classroom came to reflect the teacher not only as a personality but as a person of substantive interests and professional purposes. The teachers' pedagogical concerns and goals, for example, had come to have an organizing character observable both in the immediate curriculum and as a longitudinal continuity in the teachers' work. These concerns and goals were not necessarily curriculum in a topic sense, but they did arise within the context of curricular activity and returned to it. They were concerns and issues the teachers usually recognized about their work but had not necessarily conceived as particular to and continuous in their work.

For one teacher, a continuing concern amounting to a personal "theme" was building class cohesion or community. The teacher's development of class cohesion in various ways, including the organization of the curriculum, had reached the point where the teacher observed that the children described "the class" as a phenomenon transcending a particular year:

> *"Most of the time when you talk about your class, you mean the entity that lasts for ten months. But for the kids who've been here, this class goes on. The concept of class is entirely different. A class is something you enter and leave. It continues. Part of that has to do with the accumulation of work from past years. I didn't realize this until I picked up that subtlety in their language."*

For the teacher who is an artist, the interest in art had become an emphasis on helping children learn "to see," to experience the world visually in differentiated and refined ways and to be able to give expression to their view:

> *"I offer different materials so that if a kid wants to build or make a collage, he can, and so that there are all kinds of ways to see a thing."*

> *"My whole contention is that kids have to be taught how to see,*

> *and people don't do that."*
>
> *"I'm trying to use ways of getting them to think, to use their imaginations, without directly telling them that they can do that."*

For a third teacher, the interest in social studies and the world around was more especially a concern for helping the children understand the commonalities and differences in how people live, not only in the immediate neighborhood but in faraway places and times:

> *"When I moved here I saw that this is a rich community in terms of resources. But do the children appreciate this? I wanted them to, so I had to figure out how to use the restaurants and food shops and churches and all the other things in the community."*
>
> *"I was also fascinated by the involvement of the parents in the school."*
>
> *"My preference is for curriculum about people--how do people live, how do they relate? Whether it's the Dutch or the Eskimo or modern-day 96th Street. So what I pick up is the Eskimo mother caressing and holding her baby, the way 'your' mother held and caressed you, or the Eskimo mother combing her hair and braiding it with a pole like your mother combs and teases hers with a comb."*

For the fourth teacher, the underlying fascination seemed to be with children's own entry points into curriculum, with what the children offered. The curriculum reflected a very conscious relationship to child development and to children's memories, connections and experiences as they came out in discussion:

> *"We are studying the adaptation of the fish body--whether they have big flippers or little flippers or fins to propel them through the water and how they protect themselves. Kids are very interested in protection and defense. So we study whether the fish has poison, or legs, or sharp teeth."*
>
> *"Through my courses and experience I've gotten to know more about what children are like at this age, what it is they're going through in their development, and what's important to them. And I base my decisions on that."*
>
> *"Oh yes, we'll be talking about something and a kid'll say 'when I went to the country, I saw...' They relate it in their own minds to what I'm saying in the classroom, whether it be about Indians or, like, the corn discussion today. Talking about corn led to discussion about 'my father's vegetable garden in the country and how he plants vegetables up there, and how he weeds the garden' and a trip to Idaho during which the horses ate the vegetables, etc...." I do en-*

> *courage that kind of thing because it's "kind of an opportunity, to help them understand what you're doing."*

In the fifth classroom, one of the teacher's primary curricular themes was the "performing arts" and the dramatic aspects of interaction--"plot," "hearing," "acting out," which she related to her concern for integration of troubled children by including *all* children in opportunities for expression.

> *"Then we began to act out the story boards, poems, and plays. Different groups would get together and do a play. This went on until Halloween, when we* all *performed for each other."*

> *"I started on Halloween in September because I found it was the perfect vehicle to take off on myths and what myths are for--that the myth of Halloween really helps a child deal with fears and is a society's way of allowing fear and getting rid of spooky feelings. Then I read them some myths and legends.... We're working on a dance now with a choreographer, a dance which includes 'there's a time for peace, a time for war,' etc., which gives a very nice lead-in to how these really big topics affect our heroic legends. And what the myths and heros of our present day are--for example, baseball figures."*

> *"The children and I evolved a list of words that had a contrasting sensate feeling, and we're going to choregraph this, enlarging on how these words affect our bodies and minds. We're going to see if we can dance to them. Last night, as a writing exercise, they started putting the words into a dialogue--which they've learned from doing the Pagliacci dialogue--or a story or poem. I'm hoping this will unlock a lot of the children's inibitions about dancing."*

The existence of these characteristic and individual themes and concerns in the teachers' curricular work indicated that the teachers saw their personal connection to the curriculum not as a way of entertaining themselves or momentarily enriching the curriculum but more profoundly as a way of fulfilling their function as teachers to create real learning possibilities. The classroom reality reflected them and in observing classroom reality, they were assessing themselves as teachers, their long-range development or short-range response, the practices and atmosphere they found supportive of their contribution to the classroom, and those they found difficult. Reciprocity with the classroom was sufficiently developed so that the teachers looked forward to discovering in what they were doing new aspects of their professional thinking:

> *"Actually the process of generating ideas has been ongoing for me as I've been teaching. The ideas have always been there. What's needed improvement most, and what has improved most, has been getting the ideas into a form where they can be served up. A lot of that comes out of the meetings with (the collaborating teachers)."*

*

> *"I've changed a lot over the years...I figured out what I was comfortable with...I think I got to know myself more as a teacher and what I was comfortable with...I feel I have to make most of the decisions in the classroom. What we study is usually what I want to do. Of course if I see that nobody is really interested in what I'm doing, then I have to stop."*

The teachers' view of the classroom as reciprocal with them implied that they saw themselves as whole people who happened to be teachers and who engaged themselves as whole people in their classroom work. They did not conceive themselves *solely* as specialists in one or another curricular area, consulting with children on their specialty. Their ability to enrich the curriculum through their special interests enabled them *to see more meaning, direction and possibility in the children's work.* In turn this enabled them not only to enrich their support but to express and develop their long-range individual professional purposes and concerns. Similarly, their special expertise could be a point of immediate access in their relationship as resource to other teachers, but they did not relate *solely* as specialists. Their relationship was as whole and capable professional people whose delight in the work they would do with children collegially was supported by particular expertise and by their interests. Released in their interest and intelligence about curriculum, they could relate as whole and real to children and adults in the school.

The phenomenon of teachers as resources in the sense of being whole and real and having interests and styles that are reflected in the classroom, created multiple possibilities for continuity and connection in curriculum beyond those existing at the beginning of Open Corridors organizational changes.

OTHER ADULTS AND CHILDREN AS RESOURCES

Recognizing their own expertise and reciprocity with their classrooms, the teachers could also recognize and appreciate each other as resources. In section 6, the environment of the school was described as a community manifested in corridor life, in principals' leadership, in teacher and parent involvement beyond the classroom. Adults in the school were accessible as persons and as resources. In contrast to past situatons of competitiveness and secrecy, the teachers' relationships with other teachers and their sense of their own engagement as a resource made it possible to send a child to someone else for help or to invite another adult to work in the classroom.

In this environment, the teachers' possibilities for enriching curriculum and for offering support and extension for particular children were increased.

> One of the parents said that her son had come home from the Brooklyn Children's Museum inspired by its waterworks. He wanted to build a model city of the future powered by hydroelectricity. He had some knowledge of water and electricity from previous school work but he didn't think he had the competence for what he wanted to do now, and wasn't sure it could be done in school. He set his alarm to get to school early, only to find his teacher absent that day. Then he arranged to

consult with another teacher whose interest and competence in such things he knew about, and he made his initial plans with that teacher. Later his classroom teacher picked up on it and followed through.

*

"(When a kid is having a problem) is where the other people in the school can become very important--I'd talk to (the supply person, the drug coordinator, the security guard) because they have a lot of interaction with these kids at loose times...." The teacher had said earlier that the kids really admire and love the security guard.

Not only did teachers send children to other adults for particular expertise, they could also learn directly from each other and share knowledge, resources and planning. The working relationship of three teachers on the "architecture" curriculum was in part a pooling of strengths.

"What we do in our meetings is share what's strongest for us. I've picked up a lot from __ on how you help children look at something...I collect homework drawings and we study them together...."

Beyond being resources for particular expertise and strengths, other teachers and adults in the school were extenders and checks on the teachers' own practice. They were a way of thinking further about what they were doing:

> At a lunch meeting, T asked R how she handled it when kids weren't interested in the research topics she suggested.... R asked T what he does when kids hand in book reports that are just dialogue and not really summaries. They discussed this back and forth.... T expressed his delight with the writing coming out of L's work with the kids....L gave a few more ideas. R took some of them down, and E wanted to get a copy of all....There was some comment on the drawings by E's children of "Broadway characters," posted on the bulletin board.

As described earlier, in both schools the principal was acknowledged as a person of strong interests that enriched their curricular possibilities, as, for example, through the special programs the principal brought in. Though differences in principal and teacher roles existed and sometimes elicited a teacher's defensive reactions, the principal was also certainly someone to whom the teacher could send a child with some special piece of work to be admired or whom one would ask to join a class celebration. Teachers, in what they said, showed that the principal was broadly supportive and that their relationship to him was fundamentally different from what had existed in the past. There was an expectation that the principal should and could understand what the teacher was trying to do in curriculum and that he could be asked for help.

"He does come into the room, quite a bit. And my kids will go and get him if they want to show him something and he's free, or if

they feel mad about me they'll go and complain."

*

> *"He inquires as to what I'm doing. He comes in and talks to the children. I get feedback. If you feel you are doing a fairly sincere and commendable job, you need to hear it back, and what he gives me is enough when I need it. And I know that if I'm really stuck, I can go to him and we can talk about it."*

A child's description of one of the principals--and the fact that the teacher could share it with the principal--also suggests the quality of relationship in the school, based on recognition of persons:

> A kid's essay describing the principal shows acquaintance with and appreciation of the person: "One important fact is if you have to tell him good and bad news then always tell him the good news last otherwise he'll forget about the good news and only remember the bad news and then he'll be in a bad mood for the rest of the day."

Consultants from the various special programs in the school were of course seen as resources but their contribution was not necessarily boxed by their specialty. Some had been working so continuously in the school that they were part of the community and contributed from more than the nominal area of their expertise. Teachers often included the specialists during the planning process, challenging and extending the consultants' work. The teachers' decision-making process, framed by their own expertise, blended that of other people.

Like other teachers and the principal, parents and advisors were also accepted as people and as resources in various ways. Individual parents were known and called on as part of whole-school concerns and programs, picking up efforts to maintain the quality of vitality in the school. Even after advisors moved onto other classrooms or another intensity and focus of work in the school, the advisors continued to be known and related to as part of the school community.

Children's expertise, observed by the teacher and by other children, was also a resource:

> *"In the animated film project we can only work with three small groups but I told the kids that that doesn't mean only 18 kids are going to participate in animation. If someone in the room really does great lettering or drawing, he or she can be asked to help for a while."*
>
> The next step in the work is to make a sculpture of a Broadway character. As an example, the teacher brings out V's sculpture of the "Pigeon Lady," saying "V is always a step ahead of me."

The quality of adults and children perceiving and relating to each other as people was conveyed in observations by many passing remarks:

The teacher comments to the group on E's oil painting, praising the rendering of the bricks. Recognizing that E is unhappy about the way the door came out, she suggests a way he could remedy this. Another boy volunteers sympathetically that he's been in class with E for four years and "E never likes anything he does."

*

The teacher has a bit of difficulty getting the projector set up... A girl nearby says, in a quiet and friendly way, "It always takes her forever to fix it." The teacher responds equably: "And I always get nervous, right?" A few seconds later, from another part of the room, a kid says: "But you get better and better every time."

10: Themes and patterns in curriculum content

In creating possibilities for teachers to see children's actual processes of forming knowledge, Open Corridor changes also enabled teachers to begin to see that the children's interests were *big* interests like their own, interests that addressed basic human questions and attempted to make sense of the world in personal, idiosyncractic ways. Knowing that in the areas of their own interest there were many ways of approach and many possibilities for inquiry, the teachers could begin to see that curriculum might consist of the child's own construction of meaning within what the teacher offered rather than "coverage" of a fixed body of information or set of concepts. The child's questions could be recognized as the human questions about phenomena and relationships that underlie and are common to the fields or areas of inquiry into which our current knowledge is organized. Teachers could begin to see that every field has multiple questions, developed through successive generations of inquiry, and that these fields have become differentiated in their modes and mediums of inquiry. Teachers could begin to recognize the continuity of fundamental questions through many fields, to understand that an individual child's fascination with a specific aspect of the world might well link to one of these fundamental questions and to discern that the child's interest could result from the aptness of a field's mode or medium of questioning to the child's temper.

The prescribed curriculum of the formal classroom presents fields of inquiry in self-contained "units" as if knowledge were fundamentally divided. It "covers" the field by arranging a step-by-step build-up of fact and generalized, abstract ideas to frame the fact. It assumes only *one* pattern in content and that this pattern is appropriate and makes sense to all children.

Supported by Open Corridor structures and processes, teachers' connections of what they observed as interesting to children with what interested them personally opened up ways for them to begin thinking about curriculum as having patterns and connections other than those offered by the prescribed curriculum. The study documented that teachers have indeed developed some of the possibilities created by Open Corridor changes for building curriculum informed by an appreciation of the complex connectedness of content.

The very organization of curriculum around themes extended over a long period of time and unifying many kinds of experience reflected teachers' awareness that knowledge and understanding are more than "coverage" of a fixed body of information or set of concepts. Moreover, in the interviews, teachers made many remarks about the content they offered that indicated their awareness that children were actually connecting with themes beneath the surface of the curricular topics and their intent to support that connection.

> *"One year I read a book on the circus to my kids, who were really grabbed by it--not the text but the pictures. The circus wasn't coming to town for weeks, and most of the kids hadn't been to a circus ever. I wasn't even sure they would like it, because I've taken kids their age and had to leave early. But I saw that my kids liked the pageantry and ceremony, the fantasy and ritual aspects of the circus, so that's what I emphasized. In a curriculum, it's not only the content that counts, it's the form and the value-tone, meaning the underlying appeal and the possibilities it presents for objectification."*

*

> *"In both science and social studies this year we're doing 'adaptation to the environment' as a theme. I didn't quite plan it like that, it just seemed to evolve that way. We were doing American Indians and the kids grouped all Indians as living in tipis....At first I just wanted them to know that there are different Indians; then I realized myself that different Indians have different styles of living because of the environment, so I brought that into focus with the kids...."*
>
> *"When we went to Tiorati, a rock shelter there brought the Indian rock shelters to life for the children. The kids made a model of a rock shelter in the classroom. We discussed why it was a good shelter, facing the wind, near water, near food, near trees."*
>
> *"Then for science--I decided to do the beach, the ocean. By then I'd already developed the social studies so it was easier for me to realize that adaptation was important to the beach/ocean as well as the Indians....We went to the Aquarium and saw stone fish. The kids began to realize that camouflage is important. We made that mural of the ocean and we're making fish to put at different levels. It connects very well with the social studies, I think."*

Clearly, the teachers did not present an interest of theirs such as architecture or history or literature at an adult level, but what they offered was not just a simplified version for children. They were able to connect what children were doing with the organizing fundamental aspects of the field in which their interest lay and to offer pathways for exploring it that were appropriate to the children's age and allowed their personal approaches.

The teachers saw that the field or area of their own interest (understood in terms of the children's deep interests) could be approached in many ways, had many fascinating aspects and extensions, and could be pursued over a relatively long period of time through a variety of activities to build up a complex rather than linear understanding and experience for children. As already described, they planned multiple activities and offered many paths of entry in their presentation of the curriculum. For them planning was much more complicated and engrossing than weekly "lesson plans." In a real sense their planning was continuous, not only within a year but over a period of years. Their sources of plan were multiple and deeply embedded in their past experiences.

> *"Teachers sit around flow charting and can come up with a connection of anything to anything. But that's why I stopped flow charting. There are connections that can be made, but how real are they, or are you forcing them? I think the flow chart is more appropriate after the fact, as a presentation of something that's occurred among the kids, not a figment of the teacher's imagination...."*

Making connections, in fact, was the teachers' way of organizing the curriculum, reflecting their awareness of connection as the way in which understanding is put together. One of the ways for connection-making the teachers offered children was incorporating comparison and juxtaposition into the curriculum itself.

> *"Whatever little project you're doing you've got to relate it back to what your overall idea is. And the overall idea is to look at the present environment and compare it to others. What else can you do but look at where you are and compare it to other situations?"*

*

> *"I bring in lots of material for the kids to see the possibilities of the curriculum, and then start some small activities to develop their sensitivity. I try to offer them as many different angles as I can, like looking at buildings from a photographic point of view, from other artists' points of view. I offer different materials so that if a kid wants to build or make a collage, he can, and so that there are all kinds of ways to see a thing."*

The teachers' intention was to build, through connections, a framework within which the child could generate further questions and activities pursuant to his or her own interests in the topic.

> *"If you have an intense environment--kids seeing what other kids are doing, a really involving project--then the things they come up with spontaneously are more likely to be things*

> *that have a relationship to the theme in the first place. It's not like an interest in peas coming out of nowhere. It's more likely to be a kid bringing in a piece of broken glass from a phone booth, which relates to discussions we've had on phone booths and safety glass in bus shelters, etc. The kids start finding street work. They developed a whole relationship to the repairs of gas leaks on 96th Street. Or kids brought in a whole series of photographs of the St. Louis arch for our structures work. It's not something I brought in, but the project generates interests that are related to it, so that cuts down on the problem of scattering once the project is really rolling."*

The framework of connections was planned by the teachers to enable children to relate areas such as science, math and reading to the main curriculum theme. The teacher quoted earlier decided on her science theme--the ocean/beach--separately from her main theme on Indians but as the children began to respond about fish and fighting, she began to see both the social studies and science topics connected by the theme "adaptation to the environment" and was thereby able to take the connection further. The teachers similarly planned how reading and math could be related to the main theme, though it seemed to be harder for them to see the relationships within mathematics that echoed and connected with relationships in social or environmental studies.

Just as the teachers planned and organized for children's connection-making within the main theme, they also planned their parallel support for reading and math in terms of children's connection-making. They had developed reading programs parallel to the main curricular themes that were more connected to children's actual patterns of entering reading. They had developed libraries, circumstances for reading and supportive activities that allowed them to monitor children's progress in reading and encouraged children's view of the variety of reading experience and the social context of reading. In mathematics, what has opened up are possibilities for re-engaging in a process, for re-encountering it in many different ways. However, whether the teachers made connections with math in a conscious way, they were all using model-building and mapping, and in that context they were offering experiences in size and scale, measurement, pattern, proportion, symmetry, geometric figure, and so forth. Many of these subjects were considered as math exercises, frequently without connection to the illustrations possible in the model-building and mapping.

In introducing new activities or aspects of the curriculum, the teachers sought the children's recognition of what was the same but slightly different in the new thing, and in so doing revealed their own understanding of connections underlying their area of interest. In this example, the teacher's interest was art:

> *Did you do anything about pattern in general? Like, 'this is brick pattern, let's look at other patterns?' or 'What does pattern mean?': "Absolutely. That's how we began." Before you went outside? "Yes. We talked about groups, like 'lots of' leaves, and then individual leaves, breaking the group down."*

The teachers' awareness of underlying connections was not dependent on nor signalled by complete knowledge of a field, a period of history or an activity. The teachers were not encyclopedias. What they had, out of their attraction for the subject or activity, was a sense of what the thing was about--how to get the knowledge needed, what kinds of resources would exist, what kinds of activities might bring out the important issues of the topic, what *would be* the important issues that would engage the children about the topic, what would constitute a fairly complex understanding or rigorous exploration of that topic, what kinds of questions to ask to move the children forward. The teacher speaking in the following excerpt is familiar with the field of history; from this base she could add the specific knowledge about Indians that she needed:

> *"I find my choices are not based on what I know so much as on what I feel comfortable with (history). I knew very little about Indians when I started out. I was learning with the children. But I'm not afraid of it, and I don't mind not knowing. I'm here to learn, and the kids learn. I think that makes it more exciting. If I knew everything about it, and I didn't like it, I wouldn't even want to do it. I think if you're not interested there's no way you can make the class interested."*

There were differences between the teachers in planning. They differed in how they handled areas with which they were unfamiliar or in which they had no great interest. They also differed in the degree to which they drew on spontaneous, emergent connections to translate their big plan into their day-to-day plan. Of course, all the teachers were responsive to emergent connections where they saw the relatedness, and all worked from prior planning.

Having developed expertise in the area of their interest, the teachers were aware that in other areas their expertise was not comparable. Pooling of expertise, sharing of ideas, consulting with other teachers, parents, and special resource people were all evidences of recognition of their relative unfamiliarity and of efforts to strengthen their possibilities for supporting the children. Obviously, the teachers didn't expect to be expert in all areas and therefore they drew on other teachers' expertises as an addition to their own. At other times, a teacher expected to be supported by another teacher or adult as she sought for an understanding of a less familiar area.

> *"This year I would like the kids to be able to write creatively, where I don't constantly have to give them topics. This is an area I'm choosing that I'm not so familiar with. I needed the resource specialist to get me started. So I read to them a great deal and presented problems to them. But not at the same time as their writing time. I'm curious to see if some of that gets back into their writing. I certainly helped them during their writing time at the beginning, thinking of topics, and the writing is fantastic. I'm trying to use ways of getting them to think, to use their imaginations, without directly telling them that they can do that."*

In this situation, the teacher extended from her understanding of the connectedness within the field of his or her expertise to an assumption of connectedness in a less familiar area. Teachers sometimes sought to discipline their own lack of interest in an area by scheduling regular periods for working in that area. They might also use workbooks for drill, supplementing what they could offer through connection with their main curriculum.

Differences between teachers in reliance on spontaneous connection-making was not related to responsiveness to what children were doing. All of the teachers guided the implementation of their plans, modifying and adapting their work according to how the children responded. What differed was the degree to which connection-making "on their feet" had been systematically prepared for and supported by the setting of an overall plan for the year and of a framework of detailed knowledge. Connection-making could be a means of consistently and gradually "thickening" the plan with actual relationships within a framework of possible relationships that had been blocked out.

> *"Things just come up spontaneously. Today we were discussing corn in relationship to Indians. We talked about nutrition--corn being part of a family of grains--which you have to eat every day. The kids remembered some of that from our nutrition study last year."*

At other times, spontaneous connection-making could be the means of creating a plan, or carrying its thread forward, with less substantial backing from a framework of prepared possibilities. To some extent, both kinds of "on the feet" connection-making were used by all the teachers, but for some teachers one or the other kind predominated.

* * * * *

Despite the fact that awareness of patterns of connection across content areas is emerging, its emergence is slower, more uneven and incomplete than the development of broad continuities within a particular theme. Though teachers might seek to make connections between unfamiliar areas and their main theme, they less frequently took what they knew and sought to inject it into what they didn't know as well. Though they might integrate painting a mural into the activities of their social studies curriculum, they were less likely to observe to a child who was painting that his pattern-making involved relationships of size and scale that he or she had been developing in mapping a city. In part, the teachers themselves did not see the relevant point of connection.

Though teachers' individual recognition and use of underlying connections and continuity in curriculum content areas may still be incomplete, looking at curriculum schoolwide, the emergence of patterns in content is more extensive than is apparent from any single classroom. The very fact of teachers' release from an old-style sequential and unit-type curriculum to curriculum that builds on multiple connection has begun to give visibility, on a schoolwide scale, to the reality of connections between content areas and the pervasiveness of certain human questions.

At the beginning of the Corridor, the organizational changes that enabled children to re-encounter materials and ideas in many ways were used to find, for example, the many things that could be counted within a room. With teachers' interests joining children's now-visible interests, more complex curriculums have developed, even around the standard curriculum subjects. Because these curriculums are in continuity with children's interests and involve, at least to some extent, teachers' awareness of the complexity and possibilities of connection within the field of interest, they are implemented and developed in ways that necessarily reveal underlying patterns. Walking through the school, certain pervasive curricular threads--work in mapping, study of how people lived in the past, visual and three-dimensional work with emphasis on great detail and observation, study of the environment, and so forth--indicate the emergence schoolwide of patterns in curriculum content. Children's inquiry into spatial relationship, into history and environment, has been handled in a variety of ways evident in classrooms, halls, performances and other public manifestations.

11: Responses to children's patterns

> The pattern of relationship to a child isn't a one-way thing, where one tries one thing and it either works or it doesn't work. One tries and then modifies in terms of response. The plan may work for a while and it isn't wrong because it stops working. A new adjustment is then needed. The growth process involves constant adjustment.
>
> -Lillian Weber, "Expansion of Corridor Project, September 1969-January 1970," 1970, unpublished documentation, p. 24.

One of the primary possibilities created by the changes begun by Open Corridors was the release of children to learn in ways natural and appropriate to their patterns of learning. By breaking down the whole class so that children could function individually and in fluid groupings with others, by allowing movement, activity and interaction, by providing for individual choices and personal patterns of pace, approach and content, the Corridor classroom allowed children to be visible in their individuality and wholeness. In such situations, children's interests and styles would emerge and the teacher would have the information with which to guide her teaching process. The process of interaction was seen as continuous, based on children's responses.

> In fact the variations and complexity are fascinating to the teacher as she herself discovers the material. But her observations must guide her development of variations. How many children are in fact responding? Are the variations and complexity ones that developed out of children's use and that are possible for children's use? There is a tendency to have very easy tasks and extremely difficult tasks, sometimes ones that can be responded to *only* in that way. The teacher must always question whether in fact she has taken the material and made it fit *her* interest, *her* concern. Her contribution to variation and possibility with materials must be in support of the *child's* growth and possibilities for *him*.
>
> -*Ibid.*, p. 22.

In the work of the teachers studied the emergence of response to children's patterns at many levels was evident. As already discussed, the teachers' choice of curricular themes reflected a selection within their own interests that matched interests they knew children to have. Teachers characterized their curriculum topics as subjects children couldn't fail to be interested in and were sure that what they were offering was in harmony with children's interests. But they were quite aware that no curriculum topic ever came out the same when done with a different class, and quite aware of children's input.

Asked directly about children's interests, however, the teachers initially answered in terms of their response to children's ephemeral interests or to the few instances of children's extreme difficulty, forgetting that their very choice of curriculum and their arrangements of classroom life were based on their experience and understanding of what suited children of the ages they were teaching. To some extent these responses reflected inadequate understanding on the part of the interviewer as to what needed to be probed. They also reflected a reality that is discussed more fully in Part Five: teachers, like all of us, only partially and intermittently hold on to their own history.

In fact, the teachers had much earlier abandoned the idea that they should cater to passing interests:

> *"I think my first mistake, when I taught kindergarten, was thinking that in an open classroom you never say 'no.' It didn't take me long to realise that it's impossible not to, that you're not really helping them. So I developed at that point."*

*

> *"Very early on my approach was that kids should work on what they're interested in. There was no idea of an overall theme. The problem in the classroom with basing your curriculum on that is that you end up scattering in a million different directions and things can tend to rise and fall too quickly because overall the kids' attention span over a period of days or weeks is short."*

*

> *"Some of the kids are interested in football. Well, I can't do anything with football. Though I like to pick up on as many areas as I can, it's ok, I can do it, as long as they're within my framework. I think kids respond to everything they're interested in."*

In focusing on children's *big* interests in the selection of curriculum theme, teachers had not at all discarded the idea of teaching in ways that connected with children's interests and styles. Indeed, having made a choice of topic that joined children's interests, teachers were well aware that they created a framework in which spontaneous interests would emerge in relationship to what they had planned.

> *"With the flight project, it got to the point where there was such a backlog of written record that kids would pick up on things that were done before they were in the class and wanted to duplicate or get ideas from. It got to the point where I hardly had to throw ideas out anymore, there were so many coming from previous work. If you have that kind of intense environment--kids seeing what other kids are doing--and the project is really involving, then the things they spontaneously come up with are more likely to be things that have a relationship to the project in the first place."*

The teachers were also aware that whatever they chose, children's responses--even the nature of the class as a whole--could and would affect the actual course of the curriculum development.

> *"When it gets to doing it, then it depends a lot on the kids... like the Egyptian thing is a fluke--they made gorgeous hieroglyphics and papyrus and stories. Last year's kids probably wouldn't have done that, or it wouldn't have interested them."*

And the teachers expected that no one theme, no one activity would accommodate every child's response all the time. They planned for individual response by organizing their curriculum with many, simultaneous threads.

> *"There's always auxiliary work happening in the classroom, always a place for kids to generate their own projects that may or may not be related to the main curriculum. I don't want a curriculum that's so one-directional that kids have no other place to go. In addition to the school block model and the history books, there's the animated films...."*

In every statement about their work and in every interaction with children, the teachers indicated that their own practice was designed to be responsive to children's patterns of learning. They showed awareness of developmental variations and accepted them as natural within any classroom. They treated these differences not as difficulties or discontinuities but simply as circumstances with which they coped in a variety of ways.

> *For some kids the reading will be too easy, but the kids enjoy that and "it doesn't have to be exactly on level, you know." "I pick other books for other kids, so they don't get frustrated. If you give them a book they can't read, they get very frustrated. That's also why I read to them a lot, different kinds of reading."*

*

> *"The kids don't particularly enjoy the writing aspect of the reports. It's hard for them, though the fourth-graders have it easier because they did it last year (with me). I spend a lot of time with the third-graders, reading a page and helping them pick out what's important from it. But at the same*

> *time, they keep telling me all about what they read--'oh yeah, it said on this page that this-and-this happened.' And every time we discuss it they bring in information from their reading."*

Their expectation was clearly that it might take time for children to connect.

> *"My plan is that some kids will get involved in building the models who have not been so involved before, because the construction aspect will appeal to them. We'll start a history book and many kids will get hooked that way. And some kids--mostly the 5th-graders--will take a whole year to figure out how the whole thing works. I have four kids who came from different schools, who have never worked this way before. My expectation is that they will get it eventually."*

In addition to developmental differences, teachers were aware of individual differences between children--differences of style or pace and differences in need--and took this into account. Replying to questions about their provision for children who didn't pick up on the curriculum right away or for variation in children's patterns, teachers seemed to suggest that this didn't happen. But what they meant, it turned out, was that their initial organizational choices were *planned* to accept variation and that where there was a mismatch they adjusted.

> *What about children who don't pick up right away? "...that's individual. I try to see an area where the kid is interested.. ..I was really worried about one child who hadn't been able to do anything for a month and suddenly he was making this pyramid and putting a mummy inside and doing all this elaborate work--it was just amazing....You can't be productive all the time. I think parents and people just don't let kids be. He was always involved in something, even if it was just drawing from a comic."*

*

> *"We went to G.A.M.E., for example, and I had a lot of resistance to the clay from some kids who thought they couldn't do anything. I had to be almost dictatorial sometimes, telling them to 'try it' even if they didn't feel like it. Then, if they still didn't like it, we'd talk about it. There were two or three children who couldn't get involved in anything consistently....We put them to work at weaving, which was very homey and safe for them--they could take a long time to weave one line. We worked the weaving into the project--the Indians had rugs and hangings."*

Nevertheless, there was a certain truth to the teachers' first response about provision for children who didn't pick up right away or for variations in children's patterns. They had planned for variation, their classrooms *allowed* variation, but though they recognized and commented on the characteristic styles or persisting interests or approach of this or that child, they were not focused on consistently connecting with and actively supporting these individual styles, modes of expression or content fascinations that might represent a central continuity for the child.

The teachers relied not only on their own provision and adaptations but on the other children, the social context of the class, to ease differences in style, pace and interest.

> *"Today I had to change somebody's seat. The kid, J, wasn't working out at the table where he was sitting and I moved him. I said to the kids at the new table, 'You know, J really needs your help. We all know J teases. You have to decide whether you're going to help him tease more or help him with another way of working. I'm putting him here because I think you can help him.'"*

There were many examples of teachers directing children to each other for assistance. In one instance the teacher had established a tradition of use of past work by children within the class to help current classmates with some new and relatively difficult ideas:

> *"The specific memories and records of past work are constantly referred to. The more continuity in the project, the more that can be done. The kids who were doing the water supply for Main Street had to map it, for example. Last year a kid who is very good at mapping and scale, I still had to spend a substantial amount of time getting him to be able to map a street. This year, the water supply kids are not as able at mapping but I spent only about ten minutes showing them what the first kid did last year, which is in the project book. And they were able to translate from that."*

The teachers were well aware that changes and new experiences were inherent in school organization, for example, in the sequence of grades and changes in school or class, and also inherent in the nature of beginning things. At times the teachers even emphasized newness, evoking the children's sense of how they were different now, more grown-up, than they had ever been. In this process, the teachers helped the children manage newness by connecting with the child's wholeness through his or her memory of prior experience.

> *"I'm always telling them that they're so grown up now....I give them a sense that it's different now, and try to help them grow up and out. I'll say 'When you were in the first grade the teacher didn't expect you to do this or that, but now you're in the third grade.' One parent told me her kid said her teacher this year (me) was a lot stricter than the one she had last year. It isn't true; I know the previous teacher. As the parent and I were discussing it we decided that the kid needs to feel she's growing up, so now the teacher has to be meaner, has to give more work. They get a certain pride out of it."*

For one teacher, the choice of a different curriculum theme every year or for variation in different activities related to the theme was also deliberately related to giving the children a sense of new enterprise. In the case of sixthgraders, teachers were conscious that children would be going into junior high and felt an obligation to prepare them for what they saw as a big discontinuity in organization by helping them become more self-regulating about assignments.

But the teachers' more pervasive response to the newnesses inherent in school life and activity had been to develop ways of creating continuity from year to year, of beginning and anticipating things by reference to the children's prior experience. They built these continuities particularly on possibilities offered by the inter-age and heterogeneous grouping, including the diversity of experience, approach and ability, that is characteristic of Open Corridor classes. Teachers took as usual that the beginning of the year would be eased by the fact that many of their students were in the class again, as the older group now, and that these children would be able to interpret the classroom for the new children. This held true for children who came into the classroom during the year as well. Transition was also eased by evoking memories and keeping work from the previous year or even years in the room, whether the actual curriculum the teacher had planned was to be continuous or not.

> *"All the stuff that goes on in September--establishing how we're going to line up, how we go to the gym, etc. I've had years when I haven't done any of that. The first day of school--time for lunch--everybody lines up. Twenty-four kids line up and nine kids look around, and then they get on line."*

*

> *"I do a whole thing on their autobiographies, the first couple of days of school--who their teachers were, what they did, who their friends were, where they were born--so they get a sense of time and growth. I think it helps them to define themselves also. It is a time when they are trying to do this, when they're moving away from being adult-oriented to being peer-oriented."*

If the curriculum topic was continuous from the previous year, as it was for the three teachers working together, the teachers drew even more heavily for beginning points on the children who had been in the room last year, on work remaining, and on children who came from the collaborating class.

> *"There were 12 kids from my class last year, and another 6 from (the previous grade) who had been involved in the same curriculum. The other kids started asking about the curriculum. So I asked the kids from the previous class to talk about the things they did last year--about going up the Empire State Building and the World Trade Center, about the Circle Line trip, about walking tours in South Street Seaport, about building their models and going to museums just to look at their architectural design. It was great. I learned what they remembered, and at the same time it helped the other kids be included.*
>
> *"I used a class book we made last year as a point of reference. I used the film we'd made last year of the Circle Line tour as*

> *another point of reference. And the memories of the 12 kids were another reference. Also, kids had left their research projects, and I took those books out to show. I have class books from other years, which I took out to show the kinds of work I was expecting."*

*

> *"Introducing it was not just one thing. There's carrying over from the previous year, the grand tour of Main Street for the new kids. The new kids feed off the old kids. In the past I've depended on this very, very heavily. It works when you only have a few new kids each year. The old kids are into their projects the first day in school and the other 9 kids look around in wonder, but in a couple of weeks they're doing it too. The start-up is very difficult when there are more new kids.*
>
> *"The first day of school I had the whole class back here looking at Main Street. I went from one end to the other. For example, I pointed out the park. Now the kids who built the park have all graduated, but I showed the class the write-up--that's the crucial point of continuity."*

Adjustments in this reliance were made as the teacher responded to what he or she already knew of the children who would be in the new class from having had the child previously or knowing the child from another context or from talking to the previous teacher. Because of the school context of familiarity and because of inter-age grouping, all of the teachers knew at least half of the children from before.

> *"I could see last year, knowing the kids who would be staying with me, that the class wasn't going to roll over very easily. ...So starting up means a whole series of different techniques. A lot of the Main Street work got left for a while and now we have to develop a momentum."*

Whether or not the organizing curriculum remained the same, all the teachers sought connection between what the children had already done or already knew, and the new class and curriculum.

> *"I have picture albums of photographs I've taken over the years. Some of my current students I had in kindergarten and when they came in they looked at the photos and were rather excited...(it) was very interesting. Their concept of time is very interesting. They'll see me in the photos with long hair and look at my Afro style and say, 'Oh, that was a long time ago.' One said, 'You must have been young then.'*
>
> *"Within the bilingual program we try to get books in series covering several years. The kids know they had the book the year before. It's not like walking into a classroom and finding a*

> *whole different environment. They see a lot of things that are the same. They say, 'We had this book,' and they reach for that."*

Children's memories of prior experience in class, in school, or outside of school were encouraged more by some teachers than by others. However, in fact teachers' use of children's memories to build connections for the children was more pronounced in their practice than they acknowledged in their statements. In particular, such connection-making to what the children remembered may have been more familiar and congenial to the teachers of younger children. But all the teachers recognized that children themselves bring up the connections they make to what the teacher offers and welcomed these connections, though with greater or lesser follow-up.

> *"Oh yes, we'll be talking about something and a kid'll say, 'When I went to the country, I saw....' They relate it in their own minds to what I'm saying, wehther it be about Indians or, like, the corn discussion today. Talking about corn led to discussion about 'my father's vegetable garden in the country and how he plants vegetables up there, and how he weeds the garden....'"*

*

> *"You really can't help (bringing memories in) if you have a rap situation. Someone always says, 'I remember when' and then it's like a floodgate is opened."*

The pervasiveness of children's own connection-making through memory or in action was significant of the degree to which the teachers had estimated correctly that what they were offering was something engaging to children, something that answered to children's needs and interests. In this sense, the more teachers were responsive to children and the more they adapted and adjusted within their overall curriculum framework, the greater seemed to be their possibilities for integrating their own interests and for seeing patterns in curriculum content. Responsiveness was not a matter of picking up on every passing interest or of accepting every stylistic idiosyncracy, any more than seeing underlying patterns in content was a matter of on-the-spot intuition. Both presupposed the teachers' connection not only with the immediate situation but with knowledge--knowledge of children's development, of children's interests in content areas, and of the content areas themselves.

The teachers' connections had obviously been forged over the years of their experience and interaction with children. They were essentially the result of observations made possible by the fact that children could engage in their own ways in the classroom. Observing the children so engage, teachers interacted more fully and more particularly from their cumulative experience, and this in turn created a framework for further observation. Teachers were observing all the time, whether they perceived it as observation or not, and they were constantly thinking about what they observed. The difficulty of teachers' recognizing their observation process is part of the problem of holding history as a perspective, which is discussed in Part Five.

PART FIVE - CONCLUSION

Documentation of the study classrooms established beyond a doubt that the study teachers, who are among many experienced open classroom teachers working in similar ways, are active, engaged, thoughtful decision-makers about the curriculum they offer. Their decisions were clearly based on considerations of continuity and connection, considerations represented in their actions as much as in their thinking.

The main topics of curriculum that teachers selected were explicitly subjects that interested them personally, because their interest and accompanying expertise enabled them to develop the curriculum with rich connections and with enthusiasm that would facilitate the children's engagement. The centrality of teacher interests in development of topic did not preclude appreciation of children's interests. Indeed, the topics were ones that joined with children's interests.

In many large and small aspects of their implementation, the teachers worked for continuity and connection with children and children's understanding. They provided for multiple points of entry, for many angles of approach to the curriculum. They made adaptations of schedule, topic and provision for individual children. They made many efforts to ease transitions and to indicate and evoke connection between what they offered and what the children brought. They reached out to other teachers and adults for help in enriching the curriculum and in multiplying the capacity of the classroom setting to respond individually to children by creating other avenues of enrichment and connection. They included children in their planning and implementation as resourceful persons in their own right, capable of making connections and of helping each other make connection.

In these and other efforts at creating continuity and connection for children, illustrated in this report, the study teachers used opportunities for flexibility and connection-making that existed in the organizational structures and processes of the school as a result of Open Corridor initiatives. The changes sought by Open Corridors were "small changes" in organization and arrangement meant to create "cracks" in the monolithic school structure through which teachers and other adults within the school could begin to direct their intelligence and resources towards finding better, more responsive ways to support children's learning. The "open door" meant an intermingling of children and teachers, even for small periods of time, and visibility for what was happening in at least one part of the school. It meant some joint planning and responsibility for materials, schedules and children's work, which in turn meant meeting--in someone's classroom.

Negotiations with the Fire Department allowed use of corridor walls for expansive and temporary display. Negotiations with custodians allowed the gradual introduction of non-standard materials, furniture, storage, rugs. Heterogeneous classes and inter-age grouping gave leeway for the unevenness of children's growth and offered teachers opportunities to observe the range of children's patterns of growth and interest. Rearrangements of schedule, to allow common meetings or to release a teacher for corridor clustering, established the possibility of such administrative adjustments. Within the classroom, curriculum was built on flexibility in scheduling longer and shorter work periods, in organizing small group and individual work, in projecting studies that would last for many months and would incorporate many curricular activities and become self-generating. Curriculum development depended on the possibility of open interaction among children, of concrete work with a variety of materials. These and many more "small things" created a foundation of possibilities that would further break through the isolation and bypassing of the intelligence and resourcefulness of people that had characterized the formal school.

The Open Corridor organizational structures and processes supported teachers' comprehension of the child as person, and the release of teachers' own possibilities for intelligent, responsive decision-making. They not only allowed teachers to organize their curriculum in ways they decided would be productive and appropriate but gave them the possibility of observing how children subsequently engaged in various individual ways in what was offered. Teachers were enabled to see whether what they had projected was indeed productive and appropriate, whether it seemed to match children's interests and styles, and what further adaptations the children's engagements suggested the teacher could make to better match or extend the children's learning.

Relating to children as individuals, to their developmental and particular interests and patterns of growth, meant intelligent decision on curriculum, decisions that meshed sensitivity to children's observed interests with sensitivity and knowledge about underlying patterns in content and the pervasive human questions that organize it.

The visibility of children in changed settings made observation possible not only in the teacher's own classroom but in the halls and in other classrooms, giving perspective to what was observed of the teacher's own age-group. Access to other classrooms and other children, through direct observation or shared observation with other teachers, created a broader and deeper base for the teacher's own observations and decisions on how to build a curriculum congruent with children's patterns and interests. Teachers were not passive, inactive conveyors of prescribed curriculum and relationship.

Access and relationships did exist in a degree and quality far different from the competitive and secretive relationships that existed before the Corridor and still exist in many schools. This context of relationship--of interaction in many casual and different ways, of knowledge of other teachers and children and of what was going on in the school--supported the emergence of continuities and connections discussed throughout this report. Relationship between adults as professionals around children and teaching reinforced acceptance of what teachers offered as whole people, and released their resources, from which new relationships were possible. Relationships about children and learning generated additional and new relationships which in turn created new possibilities for curricular continuity and connection.

Examples have been offered throughout this report in illustration to this or that aspect of the schools or of the emerging continuities and connections. The very fact of teachers collaborating on a common curriculum is one example. A few additional illustrations particularize some of the other ways in which interrelationship supported new connections and continuity and new relationship:

> *The other person I relate to on a very steady basis is ___, from* Teachers and Writers. *She and I truly collaborate. We're work-on a project which involves looking at a film, taking a scene from it and writing about it in terms of yourself. We try to show films that the kids have made when they were in other classes. One film was "The Runaways" that ___'s kids had done and when we showed it we asked the kids if they actually ran away or felt like running away, or walked away, or fantasized about it....*

*

> *At a lunch meeting, the bilingual teachers discussed "...a particular problem we're having with one class which doesn't have a regular teacher yet. The children are having problems waiting for the 'real teacher,' and the temporary teacher is finding it hard having the kids feel this way. I had a lot of those kids in my class last year so I feel very responsible for them. I worry about what's happening to them and what will happen."*

*

> One of the girls in the class comes back from visiting another room and says the kindergarten teacher asked if she could bring the tadpole around for the kindergartners to see. As she and D carefully lug the fishbowl around the building she tells me about the tadpole:
>
> The tadpole is one of two that the class was given by H, one of the classmates. H had fished four of them from Central Park

> Pond (on a family excursion), had given two to friends and two to the class.
>
> I ask the girl how the kindergarten teacher knew about the tadpole. The girl says, 'Everybody knows,' and as we go down the hall, other kids from other classes do indeed stop us and comment familiarly about the tadpole. When I press, the girl lists, as if it's obvious, that people come in the classroom, kids know each other, teachers tell other teachers....
>
> In the kindergarten room, the kids gather round to look with the teacher. The kindergarten teacher asks if the girl wants to tell about the tadpole, but she backs off shyly, stands listening with a big grin as the teacher and children exclaim. After everyone has had a look, the teacher returns the bowl to the girl and asks her to bring it back when the tadpole becomes a frog.

*

Analysis of the documentation collected for the study has brought extension and clarification of the ideas of continuity and discontinuity underlying the study and the Open Corridor-Workshop Center program, of the understanding of the interests of both adults and children in relationship to curriculum, and of the nature of the teacher's relationship to the whole school. Continuity was seen as existing in relationship, in connection, rather than simply in sameness or in sequence. In particular, reflection on the documentary material has clarified that continuity is not always in contrast with discontinuity and may include acceptance and integration of what is new through reformulation and modification of prior formulations.

The critique of the old school was of its *discontinuity* with the way in which knowledge is formed and with the context of relationships in which it is formed by human beings. The formal school was seen as isolating the child, denying the child's prior experience and wholeness by its segmentalization of knowledge and prescription of response. Based on such a critique, everything about Open Corridors sought to mitigate discontinuity. Discontinuity therefore had no place in Open Corridor classrooms, and efforts to mitigate discontinuity were inherent in all the teachers' decisions and implementations.

Nevertheless *new* elements are constantly arising in any situation, and new formulations are required as a result. Though children are continuous with themselves, they are also different as time goes on and in different situations: though school remains school, groupings of teachers and children change, the curriculum changes, the organizations change. In any inquiry, new questions come up, discrepant facts present themselves. The Corridor rationale of course included recognition of the *new* as inherent in a learning situation, and stressed reformulation to accommodate and integrate the new as part of learning and change. The statement of Corridor rationale on continuity as fundamental to learning expanded to the statement that the new need not be discontinuous with the prior understanding or context or with the person at a previous moment but may have to be brought into relationship with the prior understanding or context or person. Analogous to the relationship in program reassessment of theory and practice, bringing the new into relationship with the old may require rethinking, experimentation, modification and new formulation. In the process, both new and old may be transformed but transformation preserves continuity.

Indeed, continuity builds on differences or newness. Continuity does not necessarily require conforming the old and the new. eliminating difference or making everything the same, but it does require recognizing the many ways in which what is new can link with what is already established. The study has brought out the importance of *recognition* in creating continuity and connection in curriculum. Teachers must be able to recognize in the child as in themselves the learner, the thinker, the person making sense of the world. They must recognize in the child's deep interests and questions, and in their own, the common human questions. They must recognize that a child asks from the base of what he or she already knows and has experienced as related to the ideas and understandings he or she seeks. This is not to deny new or even discontinuous elements in experience and in growth, but to affirm that reformulation always occurs around an existent self.

Of course the study dealt with continuity in the elementary school, where discontinuities of growth and organization are somewhat less dramatic than the big discontinuities of junior high school. Some work examining the transition process at the junior high level has now been undertaken by Wilma Heckler and the Open Corridor-Workshop Center program, and this work promises to raise many new considerations and aspects of continuity.

Teachers' recognition of children's interests and patterns of learning was inherent in their organization of curriculum around a theme and in their choice of theme. The study documents an addition to the definition of curriculum continuity originally adduced. Curriculum continuity includes the teacher's creation of a context of curriculum theme and activities that represents a convergence, based on recognition and resonance, of the teacher's own interests and expertise and the developmental and particular interests and expertises the teacher sees in children. The study adds to the understanding of the meaning of children's big interests as distinct from ephemeral interests, and how children's big interests can become the core and context of open classroom curriculum through the release of teachers' decision-making and interests in the framework of Open Corridor organizational structures and processes. In such a curricular and school context, continuity and connection of many other sorts, more particular and specific, can flow, be recognized and supported.

The contribution of the study to the definition of curriculum continuity and of interest naturally introduces new elements into the Open Corridor-Workshop Center program which must be reintegrated not only theoretically but practically. The teachers' *awareness* of the structures and processes framing the development of curricular continuity and the release of their own and children's big interests was not entirely in correspondance with what the study revealed, and requires further comment. Teacher recognition of children's big interests was implicit in their choice of theme and organization of curriculum, but teachers did not, by their own statements, place clearly the source of their choices in their prior experience with children. That is, they did not remember that their observations of children's interests had been at the base of their choices and that the selection from the areas of their own interest was in terms of the deep questions with which children deal in making sense of the world. Of course they intended to respond to children's interests, but in the absence of a consistent understanding of the role of these interests in the main curriculum, the teachers tended when asked about children's interests to think of passing interests. They recognized that children engaged differently with the main curriculum and that these differences enabled them as teachers to relate more directly to the child's learning. However, they did not fully conceive or implement the possibilities in these differences for understanding what might be a deep interest or question for a particular child.

Though building may intrigue all children in one way or another, the love of ornamentation, the concern for axis and perspective, the conception of building in terms of human use, are different aspects or possibilities of building. A child's consistency in these concerns across themes and activities may cumulate over the long-term to a deeper particular interest that is characteristic of that child, more deeply expressive of the child's big interest or question and thus more central to the child's learning. Open Corridor organizational flexibilities that allowed children to work in individual ways created opportunities for teachers to observe these differences more closely and, using their knowledge and expertise, to find ways of attaching to the child's deeper interests. But teachers' organization of curriculum around "their" interests--not recognizing the source of their choice in children's interests--and the still-partial nature of teachers' conceptualization of deep and ephemeral interests in relationship to the main curriculum theme leaves open the possibility that teachers may not recognize what the child is doing with that theme and may bypass the child's interest. Moreover, in their excitement over "their" interests, teachers risk overdetermining the curriculum for children, risk uncovering too much of what is possible in the subject and laying it bare in ways that limit the children's own discoveries and points of attachment. A perspective that recognizes the source of curriculum theme decision in children's interests can guard the teacher against overdetermination and opens up the inherent possibilities for greater support of children's deep interests.

Just as children's interests were tacitly recognized by teachers in their choice of curriculum topic, support of their work by changed organizational structures and processes was also implicitly recognized by teachers in their *use* of these structures and processes. Here too, however, by their own statements, teachers only partially conceived of their work as embedded in and made possible by these changes. Teachers lamented the loss of the Corridor program in its earlier forms, defining the Corridor program as those *forms*--the Corridor grouping and meeting, the advisor, the cluster teachers, etc.--and not as what it is conceptually, the *processes of* interaction and relationship, of flexible response to children and awareness of need to match children's patterns, of "small changes" in use of the school that release teachers' own capacaties for carrying forward.

Teachers thought of Corridor relationships as they were before teachers were so intensely engaging their curricular interests and powers of decision in the classroom. The teachers tended not to see the development of many and varied relationships far beyond those that existed at the beginning of the Corridor program.

At that time, at the very beginning of the program, teachers banded together to struggle for a school environment that would release them from the constraints and discontinuities of the formal school. At that time, they drew consciously on the framework of possibilities offered by the Corridor program. At that time, the advisor fostered relationships by helping with arrangements for intervisitation of children, by holding weekly meetings in classrooms, etc.

But neither the advisor nor the tight Corridor unit *was* the Open Corridor program. Both were means for developing the interaction and relationships that were conceived as the heart of the Corridor. What was aimed at was the diffusion of relationship, the creation of a web of extended relationship throughout the school. The teachers, busy with their work in the classroom, were unaware of the discussions on this development that had continued at the Workshop Center. The development of the "corridor of relationship"--the collaboration of teachers across corridors in one school and of an enlarged, inclusive corridor in the other school--are testimony additional to what has already been cited that relationship is *more* than it was before, though possibly different as well.

As described in the "Report to the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, 1973-75" and *The Open Education Advisor*, when teachers became more active and more released in their capacities for carrying forward, the advisor's direct help was diminished and withdrawn deliberately. The idea of the Corridor program was to create self-capacity in the schools and teachers, not to be forever an external support. Similarly, though many of these "small changes" still exist in their original form, they do not *all* still exist nor were they ever conceived as necessary conditions for or indications of the continuance of a high quality of life in the school.

The teachers tended to experience the withdrawal of the advisor and changes in particular aspects of the Corridor as the *absence* of the Corridor program, forgetting that the changes had rippled out into many additional "small changes," which in turn had spawned more and more changes, contributing to the creation of a setting--in which relationship between intelligent, resourceful people existed. *This* was what continued, whatever the transformations that the particulars of Open Corridors in any school had undergone in the meantime. In this sense, the program was in fact *more* developed and *more* integrated in the school.

While parents and principals took advantage of the changes to engage in struggles for continuing development of the changed whole-school context, the teachers' growing preoccupation with the possibilities in their own classrooms contributed to their sense of dissociation from the Corridor and from the struggle to maintain the changes brought by the Corridor. Teachers' work in the classrooms--using the frame established by the Corridor--of course contributed to maintaining the changes. Indeed their work helped further the changes by exercising them. The more exercised the new structures and processes were, the more interconnected and interdependent they became and the more powerful a presence and tradition they were within the school. Teachers also related to activities of the whole school in various ways, and rallied during the crises of the past few years in protection of the school frame.

Nevertheless, on the interviews the teachers tended to take for granted the flexibilities, the changes that permitted their capacities for creative work to be enacted. Of course their exercise of decision-making was primarily in their own classrooms. This was the domain of their decision and, intent on its development, there was some tendency for teachers to lose sight of the context of support from the whole-school web of relationship. This was what schools *should* be like, they seemed to feel, and what the school owed them as teachers who were undoubtedly investing so much of themselves and their lives in the school. Though they knew that other schools offered much less, their awareness was from the perspective of their current concerns and efforts, and from this perspective naturally dvelopment is still incomplete and change is still partial.

The recognition of the present reality of multiple relationships, of responsive educational leadership, of flexible organization, of enriched curricular possibilities seems difficult to hold onto consistently for teachers who expect their own serious inquiry and investments to be matched at the same pace and level evenly throughout the school. This phenomenon has been previously observed and discussed by the Director in the context of the transition of experienced teachers into the advisory role and into leadership roles within the school, supplanting the advisor ("Report to the Rockefeller Brothers Fund," 1975) and in description of the development of community (*The Open Education Advisor*, pp. 60-61). It is a problem of memory, of keeping alive the perspective of history as a touchstone for assessing and directing current efforts.

In documenting the intensity of teachers' engagements in their own classrooms, the study brought out with greater sharpness the fact that no matter how much school organizational structures and processes have been changed to create relationship *across* classrooms, these schools are still organized *by* classroom. Within this kind of school organization, teachers are primarily oriented to their own classrooms and will continue of necessity to be so oriented.

Yet maintenance of a framework of a changed school supporting classroom work obviously requires more support from teachers than the exercise of possibilities for curriculum connection and more than occasional or crisis-produced attention to the whole school. The conceptualization of what is required to increase the capacity of schools for sustaining changes must include consideration of the structures and processes that will counter-weight the teachers' natural orientation to the classroom, while continuing to support the teachers' classroom work. This observation about school organization is of particular significance to N.I.E.'s focus on building school capacities for sustaining change, for which the Workshop Center has been funded by N.I.E. This year's work of the advisor, Theodora Polito, has been to find ways of re-engaging teachers' responsibility for maintenance of change in the whole-school context. Her report describes and analyzes her development of weekly meetings on long-range planning for the study schools between teachers and principals. These meetings will continue next year even without the presence of the advisor, and are thus part of the self-sustaining capacity of the schools.

*

The study raises possibilities for further investigation of aspects of curriculum continuity and connection, its relationships to organizational structures and processes and the maintenance of change. The study was exploratory and many aspects now appear to merit further, more detailed examination in their own right. The complexity of the release of teachers' interests alone requires separate study. The distinction between children's big interests and their ephemeral interests is also subtle and only sketched here. A study of the continuities through the school in handling of big underlying aspects of knowledge such as construction or in support of modes of knowing such as observation, would be significant in understanding the implications of organizational change for longitudinal continuity. It would help in defining year-to-year continuity in curriculum that breaks with the sequential, step-by-step model. In the same vein would be a look at the continuity of a child's interest over time and how, in a longitudinal dimension, the school supports that interest.

Not included in the study, which focused on *teachers'* awareness was the contribution of parents and principals and their contribution is important in describing the support for curricular continuity in the school. Of course parent support to the child's continuity of relatedness to school curriculum merits a study on its own. The continuities of memory described for children are, after all, at least in part carried and supported by parents. From the standpoint of organizational change, the many uses of the hall and of displays, only some of which were documented in this study, would be worth further examination. The corridors are particularly significant in creating and sustaining the atmosphere of whole-school relatedness that supports teachers' work and children's learning. Similarly, more intense focus on teachers' contribution to whole-school relatedness in various ways would be important as part of the effort to develop self-sustaining change.

Other aspects of curriculum development in relationship to continuity seem worthy of further observation and analysis: the fairly consistent choice by teachers of curriculum themes having to do with the environment; the tendency in the upper-grade classrooms to use what historians call primary sources in continuity with use of concrete materials in the earlier grades, which may have implications for change in junior high curriculum as well; the teachers' re-integration of Board of Education curriculum guides and other curricular packages; and the teachers' different styles of whole-group discussion and the role of whole-group discussion in supporting curriculum connection.

Appendix: Annotated Interview

The following annotation of the interview presents both the original interview, the questions and probes actually asked where these were somewhat different from the planned wording, and suggested changes in the interview resulting from the experience of using it and from analyzing teachers' responses. For discussion of the development and modification of the interview, see section 4 of the text.

Questions typed in ALL CAPS are those planned and actually used. Questions in quotation marks are alternative wordings that add other aspects to or shade the planned questions. Added and new question refers to modifications made during the interview.

RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER TEACHERS AND AMBIENCE OF THE INSTITUTION

What is being looked for in this section of the interview are teachers' descriptions and perceptions of interactions with other teachers on the assumption that such collegial interaction is a major support for curriculum. However, the fact of interaction with other teachers was no longer seen by the teachers interviewed as a "new" development supporting their work, nor did they particularly remark the connection of collegial interaction to the school's wider support of their work. Thus, during the interview, a variety of new questions aimed at eliciting the teachers' perception of this wider support were tried. These were questions on ambience, on roles of other school participants. Changes in format were also tried. Asking the interaction questions after the teacher's discussion of curriculum or going back to them during the curriculum sections seemed to be helpful in pinning interaction to specific events or situations. Questions that required the teacher to refer back to his or her earlier teaching experience--how he or she had gotten into the Open Corridor, how the school had been when he or she started, how his or her own work in curriculum had changed over the years--seemed to prompt the bigger perspective needed to identify within the immediate present those aspects of the school that were supportive. All these added questions are grouped here for logical organization, though many were actually asked at other points in the interview.

WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR CONTACTS AND CONVERSATIONS--CASUAL AND PLANNED--WITH OTHER TEACHERS IN THE SCHOOL DURING A TYPICAL WEEK, PARTICULARLY AS THEY RELATE TO YOUR WORK?

Planned follow-up probes: Description should touch on/interview will elicit:

- Do you visit or look in on other teachers' rooms? When, and for what purpose?
- What do you talk about with other teachers (specific children? problems in classroom arrangement/organization? discipline? curriculum? age-related differences in children? etc.)
- What other occasions do you have for talking with other adults?

-What about contacts that might not occur in a typical week, but do happen over a longer period?
-Are you familiar with other teachers' classrooms or styles?
    -"Did you ask to be placed next to that teacher or was it just an accident, or is that something that's just developed over the years?"
    -"On the other hand, the day I was there (a teacher) came in at the end of the day after the kids left and you chatted about the kids."

Added and new question: Besides other teachers, would you describe your contacts with other adults in the school?
    -"What about the adults who work in more than one classroom, like the cluster, or resource specialists?"
    -"How about other people in the school? Are there some who have a reputation for being good at this or that to whom you might go or send a kid?"
    -"So did you meet with (another adult) at other points?"
    -"What about non-teachers--what kind of contacts do you have with them? Cluster teachers, office people, special program people, a teacher in another corridor, the prep teacher?"

The following question was planned but not used. Faced with the teacher's descriptions of complex relationships it was clear that the question required a long historical account of the context of the school, which was not the focus of the interivew. How did these relationships with other teachers come about? (Corridor, advisors, Summer Institute, and other sources). *A possibly more evocative question on this same point might begin:* Have your relationships always been like this? Have you had different relationships in the past?

Added and new question, specifically about relationship with the principal:
    -"What about your principal--does he have a relationship to your room?"
    -"Does he do anything besides...?"
    -"I've heard he's given you books--?"
    -"You didn't feel any reservations about going to the principal with that problem?"
    -"Are there other people in the school besides the principal you could as easily have talked to?"

Added and new question, about other programs and resources in the school:
    -"Are there other resources in the school, the whole school, or resource rooms--?"

The following question was asked, but was obviously too broadly-stated to be easily answered, and so it was specified by a number of questions that were added and new *during the interview process:*
WHAT ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO/FOSTERED INTERACTION WITH OTHER TEACHERS--NOW OR IN THE PAST--OR YOUR POSSIBILITIES FOR FLEXIBILITY IN ROUTINES, MOVEMENT THROUGH THE SCHOOL, ETC.?
    -"We've been talking about contacts with people, but now--what aspects of the organization of the school or the way things

work in the school have contributed to your ability to do what you want to do in the classroom? What aspects give you flexibility in relationship to curriculum?"

- "I want to get some sense of how you think the school supports, or at least allows, your efforts, your own planning and direction, to be implemented in the way that you see fit. What are the processes in the school, who are the people, what is the organization, that are helpful to you?"
- "You say that before the program you had always adapted your curriculum--but is there a difference now in your ability to do what you want?"
- "You've mentioned lunch scheduling--I'm really trying to get at organizational things, even small things like using the hall or the corridor walls--?"

New and added questions, on children's interactions and carryover. *Many of the aspects queried were also observed for in the classroom.*

- "Are you aware of interconnections between the kids in different classes?"
- "Any sharing with kids that goes on that way...?"
- "Do they come back and visit you?"
- "Do they ever join your activities here in the room?"
- "Do you know the teachers the kids had last year?"
- "When the kids come into your classroom from the previous grade, are you aware of having known them before?"
- "Aside from the sister-brother relationships, how do you know them?"
- "Do you talk to other teachers about where your kids are going?"
- "And if you have problems with specific kids, you also turn to other teachers?"

Added and new questions, on school ambience and image, and on intangibles of connection:

- "Would you say that there is an overall sense of coherence in the schools, an ambience?"
- "Do you think the school has an atmosphere, a reputation, an ambience--something that's particular to this school?"
- "Is there any sense of cohesiveness or coherence in the school that would constitute a kind of school feeling?"
- "Do you think kids in the school feel that there is an atmosphere of friendliness--and a general ability for them to see their friends in other classes or make contact with other teachers?"
- "You said earlier that the school is like a cocoon. What did you mean by that?"
- "Do you think there's awareness across classes--between kids or teachers--of teachers as having particular areas of expertise? Of kids as having areas of expertise?"

CURRICULUM

The questions on curriculum imply certain conditions underlying curriculum: mixed-age grouping, interaction between children, activity work-periods, multi-level-use materials with individual access by children, planning over long blocks of time, flexible scheduling, etc. All of these structures, initiated by Open Corridors, enable the teacher to make decisions in support of children's continuity, to introduce as relevant to curriculum elements from their own interests and thus to individually shape the curriculum.

This section of the interview was originally constructed in two parts: the first asked about the previous year's work; the second, in more detail, about current plans and activities. In actuality, this information tended to come out together, especially since in several cases teachers were continuing curriculums from the previous year. Though the questions are listed here in two sections, it should be understood that most of the information emerged in discussion of the teacher's current curriculum.

The original interview questions did not sufficiently specify the understanding of curriculum described in the conceptualization of the study and this led to inadequate probing for the teacher's actual practice and perceptions in some areas. There was no follow-up, for example, as to how the teachers related work in math and language to their organizing curriculum theme, nor on how their perceptions of individual children's different interests within the main curriculum affected their planning and implementation. These circumstances are discussed in the text.

I. Previous year(s)

WHAT WAS THE MAIN "THEME" OF YOUR WORK LAST YEAR? WHAT GOT YOU STARTED ON THAT?
Planned follow-up probes:

- -Was it something you got personally interested in? How?
- -If the starting point was other than personal interest, how did your personal interests and expertise influence the way you modified and developed the subject/theme?
    - -"Where does the idea come from--from you, from the kids, from something that's happening in the room?"

WOULD YOU DESCRIBE BRIEFLY HOW YOU PREPARED AND PLANNED FOR "DOING" THIS THEME?
Planned follow-up probes:

- -How has the fact that you've had that grade before affected your planning?
- -Did you seek out information and other preparation besides what you already had when you decided on the theme? What more did you do?
    - -"In preparing for it, you mentioned discussions--what other kinds of things did you look at, what other sources did you use?"
    - -"Did anything unexpected happen last year--did the Colonial or nutrition themes go pretty much the way you expected they would --or were there changes?"

The following added and new question *was suggested after the interviews were*

completed and is thus untried.
Would you describe any difficulties you had in the implementation of your plans, and how you coped with them?

II-A. Present year--planning and preparation

WHAT ARE YOU PLANNING AS YOUR MAIN CURRICULAR THEME *THIS* YEAR? HOW DID YOU GET STARTED ON THIS? WAS IT SOMETHING YOU GOT PERSONALLY INTERESTED IN? HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE HOW YOU HAVE PREPARED OR ARE PREPARING AND PLANNING FOR "DOING" THIS?
Planned follow-up probes:

-If this subject is something you've done in the past, or if you're teaching the same grade, how has this affected your planning and preparation this year?
-Have you sought out information and other preparation besides what you already had when you decided on this theme? Please describe how you are going about this? (Elicit detail especially if the curriculum was not a prior interest of the teacher's, if the teacher just changed grades, or if the idea came from the children.)
-When did you start on your preparation and planning?
-How far in advance have you projected and in what detail?

A number of additional probes were added to the questions on planning during the interview process. On questioning, it was evident that the planning process is quite complex, as is partially described in the text.

-"You've basically projected your curriculum now for the whole year, in general outline at least. Did you, in that planning, go into pretty specific detail too?"
-"So what do you see as the time scale for the different levels of planning--like the planning you do in August is long-range, for the whole year?"
-"So you knew in general before school started that that's what you'd be doing, but you didn't know exactly what you'd be doing?"
-"So in fact there's a lot of planning that goes on day-to-day, or week-to-week?"
-"Do you have in mind some events towards which you're working, or some final organization or presentation that the kids will do?"
-"Would you say then that most of the planning came through your discussions with--?"
-"What other kinds of things do you plan for them to do?"
-"Can you tell me what kind of preparation you did--where you went to locate resources, who you talked to...?"

Added and new questions, on organization of different kinds:

-"And you think that by having assignments, you can introduce them to the idea, or at least help them along in making a choice?"
-"How about just in terms of organization--do you have a class meeting every day or once a week, in which you talk about the

theme/activities?"
-"How do you think your view of the class as a continuing entity gets transmitted to the kids? How do you think they get it?"
-"Do the kids in your class know that _ and _ (teachers) are working on the same topic?"
-"When you're doing things in your classroom, do you have moments of seeing connection yourself in the things that are happening, things you didn't plan? You were speaking at the beginning about how a big part of your planning is a kind of informal thing?"

HOW ARE YOUR PERSONAL INTERESTS AND EXPERTISE MODIFYING OR AFFECTING THE WAY YOU ARE PREPARING AND DEVELOPING THE CURRICULUM?

Planned follow-up probe:

-What curriculum area would you consider you know the best or have developed the most?
  - -"What role do you see your personal interests as having?"
  - -"Are there aspects of the work in the classroom that you feel you are particularly strong in? How do you feel your curricular work is shaped by your particular strengths or preferences (related to joint work with other teachers)?"
  - -"Do you think there are other activities in the classroom that you bring in particularly because you are interested in them? (Describe.)?

DO YOU SEE ANY CONSISTENCIES IN YOUR WAY OF ORGANIZING OR DEVELOPING THE WORK IN YOUR CLASSROOM?

-"If you're engaged in making it real for the kids, it comes at a point where it's real for you too, right? How would your personal interest or view affect the way you move now? Have you always picked themes for study that you particularly were interested in?"
-"Besides the pattern of always moving in the direction of a people-orientation in curriculum, do you think there have been any other consistencies or patterns in the way you have approached curriculum?"

WHAT OTHER CONSIDERATIONS, WHAT OTHER FACTORS, HAVE ENTERED INTO YOUR PLANNING AND PREPARATION?

Planned follow-up probes: What about your knowledge of children?

-Have you considered what the children did last year, in your class or in another class?
-What about the needs of children generally?
-Of particular children?
  - -"How does it end up that you select out of the things you plan--you say you only do half--which half?"
  - -"We've talked about personal interests and we've talked a bit about what you think children need as a stimulus. Are there other things that influence what you do?"
  - -"Does your sense of the goals you have for children affect or enter into the way you develop your curriculum?"
  - -"Do you connect your planning with an idea you have of what the

kids need to know or to develop?"
-"Does being sparked in curriculum have to do with the kids or with the material?"
-"You said earlier that this particular group is different from last year's group. How has that played a role in what and how things go this year?"

-"You knew many kids from last year, or you knew their siblings. You've had previous experience with the age group. How did this affect your planning?"
-"How about providing for particular kids' needs or interests--what do you do with the kid who doesn't pick up right away?"
-"What about particular children--do you think about curriculum from the point of view of what they're going to do in the classroom or how they're going to relate to what you plan for the rest of the kids?"

This planned question was not needed because the information came out fully in the teachers' discussion of planning and preparation.
What resources is the school making available for you in developing your curriculum, and how are you planning to make use of them?

II-B. Present year--implementation

TURNING NOW TO HOW YOU ARE ACTUALLY IMPLEMENTING YOUR PLANS, WOULD YOU DESCRIBE HOW YOU WENT OR ARE GOING ABOUT GETTING YOUR THEME STARTED IN THE CLASSROOM?
Planned follow-up probes:

- What starting points have you offered?
- How did you introduce the theme to the children?
  - "Within your plan there are different activities, different approaches, sub-themes. How do you introduce a new direction or thing to the kids?"
  - "When the year began you had a bunch of kids who were new to what was continuing from last year. How did you introduce it?"
  - "How did you go about telling the kids that this is what you were planning to do?"
  - "How did you handle the transition to the new year?"
  - "How did you connect it to other things, or how did you place it for them?"

IN WHAT WAYS DO YOU ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO CONNECT THIS YEAR'S WORK OR WHAT THEY ARE DOING NOW WITH OTHER THINGS THEY HAVE DONE, WITH WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING, OR WITH WHAT THEY COULD GO ON TO DO?
Planned follow-up probes:

- Do you encourage the children's discussion of what this makes them think of, what it reminds them of?
- What ways do you have of evoking reminiscence, of including the children's memories?
- Do you have periodic meetings at which children report on what they've been doing?
- How are you allowing for children to have repeated encounters with a

subject/material or idea?

- "You're offering all different ways of looking, different materials, etc., but how do you get the kids to *think* about what they're doing?"
- "Do you find that you do a lot of talking to the kids in terms of 'oh well, you see--this is the way they did it and this is the way you did it'--evoking their relating to the thing...?"
- "Beyond memory, do they ever talk about relating what they are doing now and the things they did in Ms Y's room, or in previous classes, or with their families...?"
- "But you do encourage their remembering when it comes up?"
- "Do the kids do a lot of anticipating about what it's going to be like next year--or do you do any of that with them?"

A very important added and new question *that emerged from descriptions by several of the teachers of curriculum that continues from one year to the next has to do with carryover:*

- "Have you done things like what you've done this year before? Did you bring in things from those previous years, either into your planning or actual work that kids had done?"
- "What kinds of carryover do you do?"
- "Do you keep those books in your classroom?"
- "Do you have other things that the kids have done in the past in the room?"
- "Have you had a chance to follow those two kids (on whom the teacher had kept work)?"

Added and new question, not actually asked:
How do you relate math or spelling and other language and reading work to the main theme work?

Fuller information on the following topic came from observations:
WHAT ARE YOU PROVIDING AS WAYS THE CHILDREN CAN HOLD ONTO AND REFLECT ON THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH YOUR CURRICULUM? (NOTEBOOKS, LOGS, DISPLAYS, GROUP MEETINGS, ART, OTHER.)

The teachers' view of children's interests was evoked from several questions, including one previously quoted on "other factors" and from the next two questions. For reasons suggested in the text of the report, the teachers' perceptions of children's deep interests were not successfully elicited by any of these questions.
HOW ARE YOU PROVIDING FOR CHILDREN'S INTERESTS IN YOUR CURRICULUM? WHAT ARE YOU PROVIDING FOR CHILDREN WHO DON'T SEEM TO CONNECT WITH WHAT YOU'RE OFFERING, OR WHO DON'T CONNECT RIGHT AWAY?
A more promising start on this line of questioning might be: How do you know what the children's interests are?

- "What about a kid who for a week or so is out of it--nothing seems to interest him in particular? What do you do?"
- "Do you anticipate that kids may also lose interest at certain points and then pick up again? What happens to them in the meantime?"
- "Is everybody in the class interested in the current Egyptian

project?"
-"Is there such a thing as doing something else?"

Questions about the role of the principal were inserted earlier in the interview; the contributions of other teachers and student teachers tended to come out in description of what was happening in the classroom. If not, their roles, as well as those of the parents and paraprofessionals, were queried separately, though not necessarily at this point in the interview. The suggested probe was subsumed, in the actual interviews, to the question on role, and perhaps deserves a more direct statement.

WHAT ROLE DO OTHER ADULTS--TEACHERS, PARENTS, PARAPROFESSIONALS AND STUDENT TEACHERS--HAVE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE THEME IN YOUR CLASSROOM? THE PRINCIPAL?

Planned follow-up probe:

-Have their interests and expertise affected your planning and preparation, or contributed to the development of your curricular work?

-"How did you know that the parent would know something about aquariums?"

-"Have the parents been able to contribute beyond giving books?"

-"Do the student teachers have other roles...?"

-"When you have had a lot of help or special programs, how have those programs fed into what you're doing? What kinds of role have they played?"

The next two questions were suggested in discussion after the interviews were completed, and have not been tried:

How do you inform parents about what goes on?

Are you having any difficulties in implementing your plans this year? How are you coping with these?

The following question was asked as a point of information, but it might be interesting to reformulate it as a question related to the teacher's planning process and add it earlier in the interview.

WHAT KINDS OF NOTES OR WAYS OF REMINDING YOURSELF DO YOU USE TO HELP YOU DEVELOP YOUR PLANS AND WHAT YOU DO IN THE CLASSROOM?

-"Which you do at the end of a day--?"

-"Do they take a more speculative form, sometimes long-range?"

GENERAL

This section was more experimental than the others. The first question calls for a rather extended answer and, rather than enlarge the interview by asking it directly, it was absorbed into the third question below.

HOW DID YOU GET STARTED IN THIS WAY OF WORKING, AND WHY? WHAT DO YOU CONSIDER TO BE THE MAJOR ADVANTAGE OF WORKING IN AN OPEN WAY, OR IN THE OPEN CORRIDOR, AS FAR AS CURRICULUM IS CONCERNED?

The next question was tried in a variety of wordings in an effort to find the most evocative formulation, one that would include the teachers' account of his or her beginning work. At times it was added to the description of personal consistencies queried earlier.

HAVE THERE BEEN CHANGES IN THE WAY YOU PLAN WHAT YOU'LL DO IN THE CLASSROOM AS FAR AS SUBSTANCE? WHAT ARE THEY?

- "You said, before we started the taping, that you felt you'd gotten more structured in the last few years. What does that mean?"
- "When you came back to the school (after an absence) were there other changes in the way you did your curriculum?...And all of those had a direct impact on your curriculum?"
- "You said 'in the beginning'--like 8 years ago? Have you seen any development over that time?"
- "When you said you like to see the kids developing over the years, what does that mean to you?"
- "Have you always worked the same way?"
- "Have you always organized your social studies around...?"

The insertion of this repeat elicited additional information:

- "Given the plans that you've described, let's return to the original question about how other teachers in the school are connected to what you're doing...?"

WHAT ASPECTS OF YOUR WORK DO YOU THINK THE TERM "CONNECTIONS AND CONTINUITY IN CURRICULUM" MIGHT DESCRIBE?

- "Do you think the term has other applications to what you're doing?"
- "So this kind of structure is a form of continuity in a sense?"

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